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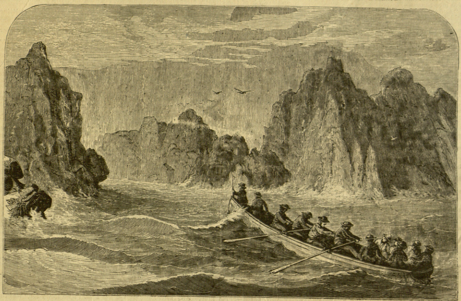

THE LANDING AT DESOLATION ISLAND.

THE ROSE OF LYNDEN CHASE.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Against a lurid mist the wood,
Colossal, dim and hoary, stood—
The haunted wood of Lynden Wold—
Under whose arches, gray and old,
All evil things that curse the night—
Spectre, and gnome, and wicked sprite—
Keep revel, till the Morning Star
Heralds Aurora from afar.

In the dry sedges, brown and sere,
A whisper shrilled along the Mere;
The wan moon, like a haggard face,
Peered o'er the towers of Lynden Chase,
And boding silence seemed to brood
With evil wing on tower and wood,
As down the antique terrace stair
She stole—my peerless Lady Clair.

Like woven mist, her silken gown
About her lithe shape glimmered down;
In jewelled sandals, velvet shod,
Light as the stealthy doe she trod;
With wild-rose lips, and brow of pearl,
And blonde hair, bound in braid and curl:
And all my soul, like sudden flame,
Leapt up to meet her as she came!

One fervid kiss—one fierce caress—
Mine! By all ties of tenderness—
By plighted oath, and priestly rite—
Mine, in foul fortune's grim despite.
Love laughs at bars—her guerdon prize
Fate pins upon the coat of freize;
And prowess, backed by sturdy worth,
O'ertops the claims of lofty birth.

Hoarse on the sombre stillness broke
The ghostly mid-hour's warning stroke;
A dreary wind, with sobbing cry,
Through gorse and covert wandered by;
And the gaunt sleuth-hound's sullen growl
Rose in a long lugubrious howl,
As swift, by lawn and level park,
Wraith-like, we flitted through the dark.

And changeful years have waxed and waned,
And many a mingled cup we've drained,
Since, flushed with triumph, fast and far
We fled beneath the Morning Star—
Since a fair ship, with swelling sail,
Flew down the westward straining gale,
And Clair of Clair, last of his race,
Mourned the lost Rose of Lynden Chase!

* * *

The Plot Against Hawley;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE PLOT ORIGINATED.

Near noon, the 5th of September, 1852, a man laboring under great excitement was walking hurriedly up Broadway, New York. His features were flushed and convulsed, his glances wild and restless, his whole mien indicative of keen anguish.

Turning to the right into Bleecker street, he soon reached a plain three story and basement brick house, to which he gave himself admittance.

"Are you there, Ruth?" he called from the hall.

A step was heard overhead, followed by the rustling of a dress, and a young lady descended the front stairs. Despite several points of marked contrast, there was a family likeness about the couple that proclaimed them to be brother and sister.

"Why, what's the matter, Luke?" cried the latter, starting at sight of the disturbed countenance that met her view. "Are you ill?"

"I've just received bad news," replied the brother, leading the way into the parlor—"news which has given me a terrible shock."

"Shocked? *You!* What has happened?"

"In a word, Clara Aymar is married!"

"Married!" echoed the sister, recoiling. "Clara Aymar married! Is it possible?"

"Yes, married! the girl I've been laying siege to for years past—the only girl I ever cared a pin for. Imagine the shock this event gives me. I'm nearly crazy."

"Then you really loved her?"

"*Loved* her! I must have *worshipped* her, or else this thing would not have so completely upset me."

"Oh, as to that, the loss of a thing always gives us an exaggerated notion of its value," said the sister philosophically, as she sank languidly into an easy chair, and smoothed out a fold in her showy morning robe. "You are simply shocked, as you say. But by tomorrow you will laugh at the whole matter."

"Don't, Ruth!" implored the brother, sinking heavily into the nearest chair. "Clara Aymar is more to me than my life! My love for her is a delirium! It's no such passing fancy as you suppose, but an everlasting passion—a rage—a flood of molten lava! And I've counted all along upon marrying her. True, she has rejected me twice, but I thought she'd change her mind—"

"She was in no way committed to you?"

"No, of course not. She has never given me any encouragement. But I am none the less surprised. I supposed that everything was favorable enough to my wishes. I knew that she was still young to marry—an orphan—without money and without friends—presumably without suitors; and I flattered myself that she couldn't always remain insensible to my attentions."

"You reasoned wisely enough, of course, Luke; but reason never decides these matters," declared the sister, with a sort of contemptuous compassion. "A whim—a chance meeting—a smile or a word—a moment's weakness—any trifle—these are the things by which marriages are brought about. But who is the bridegroom?"

"Ah! that's a point that will touch *you* a little, I think. Can't you guess who he is?"

"I haven't the least idea."

"Well, then, he's Will. Hawley."

The sister sprang abruptly to her feet, clasping both hands to her heart. The changing colors of her brother, his agitation, his anguish, all passed to her own features.

"Will. Hawley?" she gasped. "Oh, you don't mean it, Luke!"

"But I do though. It's God's truth. Clara Aymar and Will. Hawley are husband and wife."

A heavy fall succeeded. The sister had fainted. She lay upon the floor as one dead.

"The deuce! Did she think that much of Hawley?" muttered the brother, astonished. "I didn't suppose—"

He hastened to bring a pitcher of water and bathe the white features, and then set himself to chafing the clenched hands.

Capt. Luke Pedder was twenty-seven years of age, with an originally light complexion, which had reddened with generous living and bronzed with exposure to wind and sun. His form was of the average size and height, and his features of the most ordinary type. He was singularly selfish and unscrupulous, but nevertheless of gentlemanly manners, being well educated and used to good society. His ability as a navigator was fair for a man of his age and experience, but he owed his position as commander of a fine Australian clipper, more to respect for his late father and to sympathizing favor than to his own merits.

Miss Ruth Pedder was two years younger than her brother, and consequently twenty-five years of age, although she owned to only twenty. She was tall, thin, and a little inclined in her outlines, as in her temper, to angularity. The chief object of her existence seemed to be the cultivation of a profusion of long, slender, cork-screw curls. Her eyes were small and black, her mouth large, her teeth irregular and otherwise defective, her complexion muddy, her features coarse and inharmonious, and her hands and feet so large that her brother had characterized them as preposterous. She was not particularly bright, but she was bold and unscrupulous, and possessed a fierce energy which was capable of compensating in any given emergency for any lack of genius.

The father of the couple had been, during a long generation, a prominent ship-owner and merchant. But in his latter days the senior Pedder had been unfortunate, incurring loss after loss, and had finally been broken up completely—a result hastened, it was whispered, by the wild ways and certain financial irregularities of his son. The old man's failure had soon been followed by his death, and already—for such is fame!—he was generally forgotten.

"How odd it is!" ejaculated Capt. Pedder, as he rubbed his sister's cold hands. "*She* madly in love—as it seems—with Will. Hawley, and *I* crazy after Clara Aymar! And now Will. and Clara are married, and Ruth and I are left out in the cold. Oh, curse them! curse them!"

Under the vigorous treatment he had adopted, Miss Pedder soon recovered her senses, and gathered herself up in a heap on the floor.

"Are you sure they're married?" she demanded.

"Perfectly. I learned the fact half an hour since from Hawley's commander—Captain Greggs, you know. Captain Greggs was at the wedding. It took place last Friday evening—the very evening after Hawley's return from his last voyage to Rio. It was a quiet affair. Only a few friends were invited. But let me ask you a question. Did Hawley ever propose to you?"

"No. But I expected that he would soon do so. He has been here often enough—"

"Yes, he came several times to ask me for a berth in my clipper. I promised to think of him at the first opening, and I really meant to help him, for I knew in a general way that you liked him."

"I thought he'd realize that you could be of service to him," explained Miss Pedder. "I thought he'd remember that mother left me this house and a few thousand dollars to do as I pleased with. I was conscious, too, that I possessed a fair share of personal attractions. And as I supposed him to be entirely heart-free, I took it for granted that I should get him. His attentions seemed marked enough—"

"He treated you politely, of course," interrupted Pedder, "and he couldn't have well done less, after asking me to befriend him. But he never made any formal declaration?"

"No, he didn't. As mate of a Rio ship, he was away seven-eighths of the time, and I didn't expect a regular courtship. But I took it for granted—"

Pedder made an impatient gesture.

"We've deceived ourselves," he muttered. "We've been carried away by our feelings. The girl's rejection of me was really intended to be final, and Hawley's visits here were merely visits of business and friendship. But why Clara should prefer Hawley to me I can't imagine," added Pedder, drawing himself up haughtily. "Hawley has neither name, nor money, nor position!"

"Nor can *I* see why Hawley should prefer Clara Aymar to *me!*" said Miss Pedder, as she glanced at her reflection in one of the long mirrors near her. "She's a hired attendant, or something of that kind—the creature."

"I'd no idea that you thought so much of Hawley," observed the brother, as he strove to calm his painful emotions.

Miss Pedder moaned. Her eyes filled with tears.

"I thought all the world of him—just as you did of Clara," she murmured.

A long silence fell between the couple.

"Well, well, they're husband and wife," at length muttered Pedder hoarsely. "And this, I suppose, is all there is to be said."

Miss Pedder compressed her lips until they bled, staring at her brother with a fixedness amounting to ferocity.

"No! no!" she breathed fiercely. "The matter shall not end here. That marriage—that abominable marriage—"

She clutched at her heart again, as if suffocating.

Pedder opened his eyes widely.

"Why, what can we do?" he queried. "You wouldn't have me murder Hawley, I suppose? *That* wouldn't make him your husband. And, on the other hand, it wouldn't do *me* any good if you were to kill Clara Aymar."

"But there is a way, Luke, of undoing that marriage."

Pedder started toward his sister, as if electrified.

"Do you mean it?" he demanded.

"I mean it, and I swear it! I'll never consent to that girl's having Hawley! I'll dig a gulf between them as broad as the ocean! I'll undo that marriage, or *die!*"

"Softly! Where is Kate?"

He referred to their single servant.

"She's out for the day," answered Miss Pedder, arising and planting herself in a chair. "There was little to do, you know, as I did not expect you home until dinner."

"Then no one will hear us."

He drew a chair nearer to that of his sister and sat down beside her.

"What's your idea?" he asked, in a whisper.

"My idea is to separate them; to turn their love to hate; to dig a pit beneath their feet that will remain open forever!"

"But how?"

"Will. Hawley is poor, isn't he?"

"Certainly; there is no mistake about that. His mother was a helpless invalid for the last ten years of her life, and Will. insisted on her using for her comfort every penny he earned. It hasn't been six months since he was relieved of that burden. He's poor, therefore, as you say—poor as Job's turkey, curse him!"

"Then he'll have to leave his darling Clara," sneered Miss Pedder venomously. "He'll have to absent himself from his deary in order to earn their mutual bread and butter. In short, he'll have to go to sea again?"

"Well, yes; I suppose he will," assented Pedder. "He can get better wages at sea than elsewhere. He'll sail again soon, no doubt."

"I thought as much. And the sea is full of terrible dangers! When do you sail again for Australia?"

"In about two weeks—possibly in ten days, as the ship's filling up rapidly."

"Hawley is thoroughly competent to be your first mate?"

Pedder looked wonderingly at his sister a moment, and then answered:

"Of course. I know of no better man for the post."

"He must be your first mate, then. You have influence enough with your owners, I hope, to turn out the present incumbent?"

"Why, the post is already vacant. Mr. Jarding—you have seen him—Mr. Jarding has just been called home suddenly to Ohio, on account of his father's illness—"

"Good! That's fortunate. You must recommend Hawley for the vacant place to your owners, and get them to engage him. The thing can be done?"

"Without the least doubt. It was understood, you know, as I just now remarked, that I was to help Hawley at the first opportunity. We'll accordingly suppose that he sails with me as first mate the next voyage. What then?"

"You must leave him—not dead, but a prisoner—on some desert island between here and Australia!"

Pedder looked his astonishment.

"If it can be done," he said, after a pause, "what next?"

"You must come back and report that he is dead, furnishing full details and good proofs. Those details and proofs will not be difficult to manufacture. Then you must be all kindness and sympathy to the young widow, as she will suppose herself to be, and in less than a year thereafter she will be your wife."

"Oh, if this thing were possible!" sighed Pedder, beginning to look relieved.

"*Possible?* It's as simple as kissing. And the moment you are married to Clara, I will take a trip to Australia for my health, and naturally enough, stumble upon the very island where you have left Hawley; effect his rescue; tell him his wife is dead; condole and sympathize with him like an angel; and conclude the whole comedy by becoming his wife and settling in Australia. You'll thus have your Clara, on this side of the ocean, and I shall be happy with Hawley on the other."

She was smiling now, with every sign of anticipated triumph.

As to Pedder, he twisted nervously in his chair, scarcely venturing to breathe.

"There's just one difficulty," he muttered—"that of getting Hawley on the desert island without his suspecting anything."

"It can be done," and the lips of Miss Pedder came together like the jaws of a vice. "There's no difficulty about finding a suitable island?"

"Not the least. I saw the island in my mind's eye the moment you uttered the word, and a glorious one it is for our purpose."

"It will be easy for you to get Hawley upon it," suggested Miss Pedder thoughtfully. "If it's near your route, you can call there for water. If it's out of your way, you can be blown there by adverse winds, or be drifted there by unknown currents, or fetch up there by a mistake in your reckoning or a fault in your chronometer. And once there, you can have Hawley seized by some trusty agent, while he is ashore upon business, or you can send him ashore under some pretence, such as looking for a deserter from the ship or for a shipwrecked sailor, and then sail away without him—"

"Say no more," interrupted Pedder, with wild exultation. "I see how to manage the affair from its beginning to its end."

"And you now see that we can undo that hateful marriage?"

"Perfectly—perfectly. The affair will require a little time and patience, of course, and a little expenditure of money, but we are sure to triumph. Capital! glorious! What a load you have taken from my soul, Ruth! What a genius you are!"

He leaped to his feet and began pacing to and fro rapidly, with the most extravagant signs and exclamations of joy.

"First to get Hawley on his island," resumed Miss Pedder musingly. "Next for you to marry the pretended widow. Then for me to rescue the prisoner and marry him. And finally for you and me to be happy, you in your way and I in mine—you with Clara in New York, and I with Will. in Australia. You comprehend the whole project clearly?"

"From the first step to the last. There's only just one possibility of failure—"

"And that one?"

"A refusal on Hawley's part to accept the post offered him—a refusal based upon his marriage."

Miss Pedder turned pale at the thought.

"But he won't refuse," she soon declared, recovering her equanimity. "He has long been wanting just such a place. Married or single, he can't neglect his bread and butter."

"Well said, Ruth. I think we can count upon him. The post he came here to ask me for is now vacant, and I will accordingly have it offered to him, just as if nothing had happened."

"Exactly. You needn't speak of his marriage, or seem to know anything about it. You can simply offer him the post in question, in accordance with the old understanding. And he will accept it. He can't possibly have any suspicion of anything wrong. Outwardly and apparently we are all on good terms with one another, and will remain so. Let the wages offered him be liberal. Possibly he may object to leaving his young bride so soon, but the next voyage after this one—"

Pedder interrupted the remark by a gesture of impatience. He was all eagerness now—all determination.

"That next voyage after this one will not answer," he declared. "Hawley shall accompany me on my very next trip. To make all sure on this point, I will have him engaged this very day. In fact, I will see to this *now.*"

He seized his hat and gloves, addressed a few words to his sister, and quietly took his departure down town. The last glances the couple exchanged at the door were full of jubilant wickedness.

The next three or four hours passed slowly to Miss Pedder, who dressed herself richly and wandered aimlessly from room to room, unable to remain motionless for any length of time. She was beginning to fear that the whole project had miscarried at its very commencement, and was fretting herself into a fever, when Pedder suddenly made his appearance. One glance at his vivid flushes, at his dancing eyes, at his airy manner, was sufficient.

"We triumph then?" she cried, throwing herself into his arms for the first time in years.

"Completely! I saw my owners on the subject, and they sent for Hawley. He at first offered some objections, as was natural, but the high wages, the great step upward, the kindly interest we all manifested, soon brought him to a grateful acceptance!"

"Splendid!" murmured Miss Pedder, with a rippling laugh. "I knew the thing was feasible. And so in two weeks more our fond bridegroom will be plowing the sea again—"

"In two weeks more, Ruth? We shall be off in six or eight days. The cargo is fairly tumbling aboard the *Flying Childers*, to say nothing of a fair list of passengers. The honeymoon of our loving doves will be abridged to six short days more, you may be certain."

CHAPTER II.

A GREAT STEP TAKEN.

In the midst of the Antarctic ocean, a little off the route from New York to Australia, there lies a large island named Kerguelen's Land, or—as Capt. Cook called it—the Island of Desolation.

It was discovered just a hundred years ago, (in 1772,) by the French naval officer whose name it bears. It was uninhabited then, and is to-day as deserted as ever.

The smallest school-boy among our readers can find it upon his map of the world, about midway between the south end of Africa and Australia, well up toward the South Pole.

It is a hundred miles in length by fifty in breadth, and is consequently three or four times as large as Rhode Island.

Its coasts are so wild and dangerous that its discoverer, during the two expeditions that he made to it, did not once bring his ships to anchor in any of its bays and harbors.

Its shape is very irregular, but something like that of an hour-glass, it being nearly cut in two by a couple of large bays; but these two divisions are unequal in size, the northern peninsula being much larger than the southern.

Its coast line is wildly broken and jagged, its innumerable gulfs being long and narrow, and its promontories are correspondingly sharp and slender, reaching out into the ocean like fingers.

The body of the island indeed resembles that of some huge monster of the antediluvian world, even as its capes and headlands resemble such a monster's unsightly limbs and claws.

A more terrific solitude than this isle of Desolation does not exist upon our wrecked planet.

Neither the snows of Himalaya nor the sands of Sahara can outvie its terrors.

No inhabitant is there, not even a savage—no house, no tree, no shrub, no fence nor road, no field nor garden, no horse, no dog—not even a snake or a wolf.

Lone, blasted and barren, it looks like the skeleton of a land that has perished.

It may indeed be that Desolation is the relic—the surviving fragment—of a continent that went down here countless ages ago, with hosts of inhabitants, in some vast convulsion of nature.

It has certainly undergone dreadful visitations: been rent by earthquakes, pulverized by frosts, lashed and wasted by fierce tempests.

Its mountains are only of moderate height, but are capped eternally with snow.

Its vegetation is limited to a few dwarfish plants, including some mosses, a species of lichen, a coarse grass, a plant resembling a small cabbage, and a sort of cress.

Its winds are raw and piercing, its summers cold and frosty, its winters those of the Polar Circles.

The interior of the island is occupied by immense boggy swamps, where the ground sinks at every step.

The rains in Desolation are almost incessant, in their season, and the island is accordingly veined with numerous torrents of fresh water, some of which have worn out of the solid rock tremendous cavities and gullies. The only other season than that of the rains is one of almost constant snow.

The fogs of that ghastly region are well worthy of the rains, being of a cloud-like density, and hovering almost continually over the whole face of the island.

The sun of Desolation is usually hidden by a canopy of lead-colored clouds, and appears, on the rare occasions when it is visible, scarcely brighter than the moon in other latitudes. As to the moon itself, and the stars, the clouds and fogs rarely permit them to betray their existence.

No fish worthy of note, not even fishes of prey, abound in the adjacent waters, by reason, perhaps, of their containing poisonous minerals, or deadly exhalations from the volcanic fires beneath them.

Yet the dark grim sea inclosing Desolation has done something to repair the sterility of the island.

Penguins, ducks, gulls, cormorants and other marine birds are plentiful in some of its harbors.

Seals also abound.

Strange and terrible land!

Not a single human being, so far as is known, has ever lived there, save as is now to be recorded in these pages.

Near the middle of a dull, dismal afternoon, some eleven weeks later than the date of the preceding events, the good ship *Flying Childers* drew near to the island of Desolation, shaping her course toward its northernmost bay, called by Captain Cook Christmas Harbor.

A fair breeze was blowing from the north, and the ship was carrying every stitch of her canvas, including studding-sails.

Her crew—both watches—were busy about

the deck, and her passengers—a score in number—had gathered in groups, mostly forward, and were gazing with great interest upon the wild, rugged shores before them, so far as the fog suspended upon those shores permitted them to become visible.

The ship had come here for water, nearly all her water casks having been stove or started during a squall ten days previously, and every soul aboard of her having been since that date upon short allowance.

Upon the quarter-deck stood Capt. Luke Pedder, looking unusually happy, with Will. Hawley beside him.

"I mean to get our water aboard before dark, Captain Pedder," said the young executive, "and so avoid losing a night here."

"I had guessed your intention," returned Pedder, in his blandest tones, as he glanced at the huge cloud of canvas above him. "You'd better anchor in Captain Cook's old anchorage, a quarter of a mile from the head of the bay, where you'll find a fine dark sand in eight fathoms. Due north of this anchorage you will remark a small rocky point, upon each side of which descends a splendid stream of water. Get your casks ready, and hoist out all the boats as soon as you are anchored. I will go ashore with you, as will such of the passengers as may choose to do so."

"Everything is in readiness."

"As usual," and Pedder smiled. "All I've had to do this voyage is to look on and see everything done as if by magic. And naturally I was just now congratulating myself, for the thousandth time, upon having you with me."

The fine, honest face of Will. Hawley flushed with pleasure. Any one seeing him at that moment, with his features illuminated by his emotions, would not have wondered that Clara Aymar had preferred him to all other suitors. He was the very opposite of his commander, being as frank, generous and good as Pedder was secret, selfish and wicked. He was only twenty-four years of age, and embodied all the best qualities of manhood, as well mentally and morally as physically.

"It is I who have the most cause for self-congratulation," he said feelingly. "You have given me a great lift in the world. It's no small thing for a man at my age to find himself practically in charge of a first-class Australian clipper—"

"True; but you are worthy of the place, and the place has accordingly come to you. Minnell & Co. are glad to have you in their service, and I fully share their pleasure. So if you continue pleased with your berth, everybody is suited, and nothing more remains to be said."

"Except to thank the generous friend who has helped me to this position—"

"No more on that tack. I always liked you, Hawley, and I promised long ago, you may remember, to speak a good word for you when I could. The sudden departure of Jarding for Ohio afforded me the desired opportunity, and I embraced it with a joy and satisfaction quite equal to your own. Thus far," he added, "we are making a glorious run; the best I've ever made, by several days at least."

Hawley's eyes brightened.

"Then our call here for water will not set us back so very much, after all," he said. "I'm glad of that. I'd like to beat Mr. Jarding's best voyage."

"I share that desire, for several reasons. We are loaded to the hatchways with a valuable cargo, and the sooner we arrive the greater will be the profits of all concerned. The majority of our passengers are bound for the Australian diggings, and they are naturally impatient to reach their land of promise. But there is still a better reason why I want you to make a great run. Minnell & Co. are intending to put another ship into this trade soon, and I hope to have the pleasure, if we do well this voyage, of recommending you so strongly to our owners that they will put you in command of their new clipper."

How kind and hearty the words seemed! A mist gathered in Hawley's eyes. He grasped the hand of his supposed friend with the fervor of a deep gratitude.

"You overwhelm me, my dear Captain," he murmured. "Rest assured that I shall never cease to be grateful."

At this moment Hawley's quick eyes caught sight of something claiming his attention forward, and he walked away in that direction.

"The fool!" said Pedder to himself, as he sent a glance of savage malignity after his executive. "He's taken in completely! He thinks I'm the best friend he ever had. Little does he suspect the plot of which he is the object."

It is astonishing how, after a long voyage, the sight of land loosens the human tongue. The scene upon the deck of the *Flying Childers* had become by this time a miniature Babel. Everybody was talking, laughing, gesticulating, making inquiries, stirring about, and gazing intently shoreward.

"One question, if you please, Captain Pedder," said a sonorous voice near the commander.

"Two, if you like, Mr. Moody," answered Pedder, as he turned toward the questioner.

Mr. Moody was a middle-aged Presbyterian minister from the vicinity of St. Louis, who had received leave of absence to die of a fearful bronchitis by which he had been long and grievously afflicted. He had embarked out of sheer desperation for a round voyage to Australia, and had already experienced such benefits from his ten weeks at sea, that he looked fit to enter at once upon the twelve labors of Hercules, in case of its becoming necessary to do the labors of Hercules over again.

"All we are here for is water, I suppose?" queried the reverend gentleman.

"That's all, sir."

"Are there any cannibals on this island?"

"No, sir—not any."

"No savages—no heathen—of any kind?"

"Not the least specimen."

"What! is the island perfectly uninhabited?"

"Perfectly—by everything human."

"And has it never been peopled?"

"No, sir—never."

"Why, how curious!" cried the reverend gentleman excitedly. "I must certainly see it!"

"And I," exclaimed several voices in chorus.

"Nothing is easier, gentlemen," declared Pedder, with sudden animation. "You can all go ashore as well as not for an hour or two, while the men are getting aboard the water."

A buzz of joyous anticipations followed.

"You seem pleased, Captain?" whispered a voice at the commander's elbow.

Pedder turned smilingly toward the speaker.

"Well, I *am* pleased," he acknowledged. "That old buzzard," and he indicated Mr. Moody, "has just taken a good turn. He wants to go ashore, and I mean to make him a witness of the tragic event about to occur on this island."

"You'll certainly do it! Everything seems to favor us. Not a soul suspects that *I* started those water casks, in obedience to your commands, in order to make an excuse for coming here?"

"No, not a soul."

"Even Mr. Hawley, as clever as he thinks himself, is mightily in the dark. And why shouldn't he be, after all? All he and the rest know of me is that I am Mr. Breeling, a passenger for Melbourne. They don't even suspect that I am your confederate, your ally, your life-long friend, the very chap who has done many a dark job for you in days agone, and who is now along in the *Childers* to assist you in another."

The new-comer was a coarse, stout man, some forty years of age, who had just brains enough to execute for pay the wickedness planned by others, without being able to plan a piece of villainy for himself. He had long been an instrument of Pedder's dirty work, and, as his remark has indicated, had come out in the clipper, in the character of a passenger, to lend Pedder any assistance in his plot against Hawley that might be required.

"You are sure, Tom, you fully understand the part you are to take in this business?" asked Pedder, after a sharp glance around him.

"Perfectly sure," answered Breeling. "I shall go ashore with the rest, taking along the disguise you have provided—that huge beard and the other things. I shall go up to Table Rock, make my arrangements and place myself in waiting, so that when you and Hawley come up there I can take him prisoner."

"You understand that you must not harm him?"

"Of course. That's your sister's order."

"And mine also. You'll have to stun him, of course, in order to secure him, but that's all."

"Exactly."

"Yonder is Table Rock," said Pedder, indicating a tall cliff on the right-hand shore, about three-quarters of a mile from the head of the bay. "Its face is out of sight from Captain Cook's anchorage, and its top is half hidden in fogs, as you see."

Breeling looked curiously at the cliff in question, fixing its position in his mind.

"You understand, too," continued Pedder, "that you are to have a large stone ready on the edge of the cliff? This stone you are to send thundering down into the sea, at the same time uttering an awful cry of distress, and then you are to slip away with Hawley to a safe hiding-place in the adjacent hills. I will so manage my share of the affair that everybody will believe that Hawley has lost his footing and tumbled down the precipice into the sea—"

"And everything will establish that belief," said Breeling glibly. "We understand each other. You will cause a vain search to be made for the body, and then go back to the ship. I shall take leave of Hawley in time to join you on the beach where the sailors fill the water casks. And this, I believe, is all."

"All!" echoed Pedder, and Breeling sauntered forward, humming a gay air.

Half an hour later, the ship was at anchor at the spot designated by Pedder. Her boats were all in the water, and more or less occupied by empty water casks. The passengers and crew were gathered along the side nearest to the land.

"Are you ready to go ashore, gentlemen?" asked Pedder, suddenly emerging from the cabin.

A deafening cry of assent rent the air.

"Tumble in, then. There's room for all of you. This way, Mr. Moody."

The boats were soon loaded and pushed off, with noisy conversation and laughter.

"What are those white birds on the beach, Captain?" asked Mr. Moody, soon after the boats began moving shoreward.

"Albatrosses, penguins, and that sort of thing."

"And those black things upon the rocks are seals, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir."

"How tame these creatures all seem! They never see anything of man, and know nothing of his cruel ways."

The reverend gentleman fell to moralizing, while the boats sped on their way.

"How bleak and dumb the island looks!" exclaimed, in awe-stricken tones, Mr. Thompson, a New York merchant, who was going out to Melbourne to found a branch house. "It is indeed an awful desolation!"

A sort of hush succeeded, and continued until the boats reached the shore, every one gazing intently upon the strange scenes before him.

There were thousands of the birds named upon the sandy beach. They retreated a little, as the strangers began landing, and sidled awkwardly about, flapping their wings, and rending the air with hoarse, discordant cries. The seals had mostly slipped into the sea and vanished. Everybody was soon ashore, and the passengers began scattering in all directions along the beach and the sides of the adjacent hills. Breeling was one of the first to land, and he slipped away in the direction of Table Rock as fast as he could without attracting attention to his movements. A few of the passengers chased and affrighted the birds, making merry over their cries and clumsy movements, while the sailors got their casks ashore and began filling them with water.

"A little stroll will not hurt us, Mr. Hawley, while the men are busy here," suggested Pedder, with a snaky gleam in his eyes. "Let Kingston look after them, and we'll go up to the top of that first ridge yonder. I dare say we shall see something to pay us for our trouble."

Hawley assented, and the two men walked along the shore to the northward, conversing as they went. After traversing quite a stretch of beach, and climbing a succession of considerable slopes, they reached the ridge in question, and looked about them.

"A poor view," exclaimed Pedder, "and the fog makes it still worse. See! the *Childers* is hardly visible. The sailors down on the beach look like phantoms. There's a tall cliff called Table Rock a short distance further on in this same direction. It is said to be the most curious thing on the island. Suppose we take a look at it?"

Hawley again assenting, Pedder led the way in the direction indicated, but not until he had beckoned to Mr. Moody and the gentlemen with him to direct their steps toward that same quarter.

A walk of a few minutes brought the couple to the spot they were seeking. It was grandly gloomy—the brow of a jagged cliff towering perpendicularly some three hundred feet above the sea. A mantle of fogs rested upon it.

"A horrible place!" murmured Hawley, looking down from the edge of the cliff into the dark gulf of waters below. "The view from here is enough to make one's head swim."

Pedder looked sharply around, catching a glimpse of a figure, a few rods away, behind a projecting rock, which at first startled him, it was so wild and savage.

It was the figure of a burly man wearing a red flannel shirt, tattered and besmeared with dirt, and the upper portion of a pair of drawers, also in tatters. The hairy arms of this man were bare to the shoulders, as were his legs to the knees, and as were also his feet. His beard was half a yard in length, as was the hair upon his head, and the whole was as tangled as brushwood. The small portion of a countenance that was visible had been covered with mud.

In short, the appearance of this apparition was so frightful that Pedder's first impulse was to fly, a fear seizing him that some maniac shipwrecked sailor, or some mysterious cannibal, had really turned up upon the island. But a second glimpse of the figure reassured him, and he hastened to say:

"I'll call the rest, and we'll all look about here together."

"Very well, sir," returned Hawley.

Pedder accordingly began retracing his steps.

A few moments later, Mr. Moody and those with him came into view a dozen rods away, and perceived through the fog both the commander and his executive, the latter moving upon the brow of the cliff, and the former midway between Hawley and the approaching party.

"This way, gentlemen," called Pedder, in a needlessly loud voice, as if giving a signal, and that, in fact, was the very thing he was doing. "Here's something worth seeing."

The next moment a horrible cry rang out upon the still air from the brow of the cliff, calling every glance in that direction, and it was seen that the moving figure of Hawley had vanished.

Then a tremendous crashing was heard, as of a heavy body plunging down the face of the precipice.

And finally a thundering splash in the sea far below awoke the echoes of the rocky shore far and near.

"Heavenly mercies! what is that, Captain Pedder?" cried Mr. Moody excitedly. "Has anything happened to Mr. Hawley? I don't see him now where I saw him a moment ago."

"He's met an awful accident, I fear," shouted Pedder, simulating the wildest alarm. "This way, all!"

He ran swiftly to the cliff, and Mr. Moody, Mr. Thompson and several other passengers as hastily followed him. All swept a wild glance around them, and then looked down into the waters below.

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed Pedder, sinking upon his knees upon the cliff, and clasping his hands together violently. "It is as I feared! Mr. Hawley has lost his footing—has either slipped or stumbled—and has rolled or fallen over the edge of the cliff!"

The dumb consternation of the next few moments is indescribable.

"It is even so—Heaven have mercy upon him!" said Mr. Moody, as he also sank upon his knees, continuing to peer down into the sea. "See those bubbles! those ever widening circles! There is where he went down! What an appalling fate! cut off in an instant; in the very flower of his young manhood! Let us pray."

The reverend gentleman prayed sadly and tearfully, and the little party then arose and turned away, still under the impression of an awful shock, and soon bore the tragic news to the beach and to the clipper.

A search was promptly made beneath the cliff, but nothing was discovered.

The task of taking aboard fresh water was completed in gloomy silence, for the sailors of the *Flying Childers*, as well as her passengers, felt the loss of Hawley as a personal affliction.

Upon the deck of the clipper, after all the boats had returned from the island, with all the passengers, and while the second mate—now promoted to Hawley's post—was getting the ship under way, Captain Pedder was joined by Breeling.

"How horribly you looked up there!" was Pedder's first remark. "You really frightened me!"

Breeling laughed softly far down in his throat.

"'Handsome is as handsome does,' you know," he said. "The plot has worked! Hawley caught a glimpse of me, to be sure, as I was creeping up behind him, with a stone in my hand, to give him a crack, but he hadn't time to save himself. I had remarked beforehand, while putting on my disguise, a quiet little nook in which to hide him, and I took him there as soon as I had uttered that yell and started a rock over the cliff."

"And he wasn't seriously injured?"

"No; merely stunned for twenty minutes. He was beginning to recover his senses when I came away. I left his hands free, of course, but his legs tied together with tarred ropes drawn into hard knots, and as I took away his pocket knife, it will take him several hours at least to release himself. For further and final security, I left him in a dangerous place, upon a shelf of a rocky ledge, from which he will not dare stir until morning."

"And it's dark now," muttered Pedder, looking around upon the shadows which had gathered rapidly during the last few minutes. "A happy good-night to him."

The anchor was now up, the ship gathering headway, and in twenty minutes more, by the time night had fully set in, the *Flying Childers* was standing out of Christmas Harbor under full sail, on her way to Australia.

"The thing is done, Tom," said Pedder, to his hired ruffian, with a fiendish smile. "No one knows that Hawley is living! No one knows that we have abandoned him! No one knows that we came here for anything more than water! And what good witnesses we have of Hawley's death! He'll never see his pretty wife again—curse him! Oh! *never!* NEVER!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE DEN OF ROBBERS.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

A lonely farm-house among the solitudes, with wild vapor-crowned hills surrounding it, and the weird rush of foamy cataracts in the steep gorges beyond; a sunset all purple and gold, with masses of bright-edged clouds piled above, and walls of forest closing the landscape darkly in. Flora Montcalm had seen many a "Twilight" on the walls of picture galleries and artists' studios, but she never saw one that impressed her with such a sense of mystery and gloom as this.

She had been crossing the mountains from the obscure little railway station at Howlet's Hollow to the Gothic cottage among the glens of the Adirondacks, where, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," her aunt and cousins were spending the summer. And just at this stage of their journey, about half way, the rickety old vehicle had chosen to break down, leaving her no alternative but to pass the night at the nearest place of shelter.

"There's a blacksmith three miles beyond," suggested her charioteer, a red-haired, freckle-faced giant of two or three and twenty; "but we can't get it fixed up afore to-morrow mornin' any way, as I see. And Bezaleel Hopkins's folks they'll keep ye all night, Miss, and glad o' the chance."

Flora glanced timidly at the one-story farmhouse, with its steep sloping roof overgrown with patches of different colored moss and lichens and clinging house-leeks, and its one huge chimney outlined against the stormy sunset sky.

"But I'm afraid to stay there," she faltered. "It looks so lonely, and so strange."

"Good land, Miss, ye ha'n't no call to be afeard!" said Joseph Kilp. "Bezaleel Hopkins's folks is clever enough. And besides, there an't nothing else ye can do, as I see—unless you've a notion to camp out in the woods, along with the muskeeters and the minks and the foxes!"

This last argument was the most convincing of all; and, reluctantly enough, Miss Montcalm allowed herself to be conducted to this lonely eyrie among the hills.

The farm-house kitchen, revealed by the touch of Mr. Kilp's unceremonious hand on the latch, was not unlike one of Rembrandt's interiors. A great fire of logs blazed on the hearth, although it was in the month of June; half a dozen rough-looking men sat around the blaze, and an old woman was spinning in the corner, while a tall girl of sixteen sat knitting opposite.

"Evenin', Mrs. Hopkins," addressed Mr. Kilp to the old priestess of the whirring wheel. "We've had a break-down, and my passenger wants to stay all night. Can ye keep her?"

The old woman stared a minute over the rims of her steel spectacles before she answered, in a harsh, grating voice:

"Yes, likely we can."

And thus Miss Montcalm was ushered into this social circle of the wildernesses.

The tall girl, at a whisper from the old woman, shuffled into another room, probably to see about refreshments for the new-comers. And while Joseph Kilp entertained the group with a circumstantial account of just how it all happened, Flora looked timidly around her.

It was so strange, so wild, so solitary. And, in spite of her resolve to be brave and self-reliant, Flora could not help inwardly quaking.

"I don't like the looks of these people at all!" she thought. "They stare so at my watch-chain and my rings. Suppose they should be a band of brigands; suppose this should be a trap into which the man Kilp is deliberately leading me! I have heard and read of such things before. Why did I trust myself alone in the power of these human vampires? Why did I not insist on the man's going on, wheels or no wheels? Or why couldn't we have gone directly to the blacksmith's?"

And Flora worked herself up to such a state of nervous excitement by these queries that she had no vestige of appetite left by the time that Judith Ann, the tall damsel, brought in two bowls of new milk, a pan of crisp brown-jacketed doughnuts, and a liberal supply of buttermilk biscuit and delicious golden butter.

"I can't eat," she said faintly.

"*I* can," said Joseph Kilp, moving his chair up to the table. "I guess I could eat a sheet-iron door, if there wa'n't nothin' else handy."

Meanwhile Judith Ann had sidled up alongside of the new-comer, and was furtively feeling of her dress.

"Is it silk now?" said she, with a chuckle. "Real silk?"

"No," Flora answered shortly; "it is poplin."

Nowise discomfited, Miss Hopkins transferred her attention to the gold watch-chain that hung from Flora's belt.

"Would you mind lettin' me look at that ar?" she asked. "Is it good gold? I've got a brooch I bought o' Leonidas Jones, and gin him twenty-five cents, but it an't like this. Must a cost a sight of money? How much now?"

"I don't know," Flora answered nervously. "I cannot tell. It was a present."

"Judith Ann!" sharply rebuked her grandmother, "go and set down, and leave the young woman in peace. You ha'n't no more manners than a porkypine. I vum I'm astonished at you."

And reluctantly enough, Judith Ann obeyed. But Flora could not but observe that she never took her eyes off the tempting pendant of golden links. Her heart throbbed uneasily; she had heard of defenceless travellers robbed and murdered for less valuable booty than this, in just such solitary places. Her head drooped—a dizzy sickness overspread her heart.

"Sleepy, I guess, an't you?" said the old woman kindly. "Want to go to bed?"

Flora rose eagerly. Anything but sitting here, the mute miserable target for eight pairs of eyes!

"I should be glad to retire," she said rather faintly.

Lighting a tallow candle at the fire, the old woman led the way up a wooden staircase, so steep that a ladder would have been quite as good, and thence to a little room under the eaves, whose unplastered walls and rows of smoky looking beams overhead struck Flora unpleasantly.

"There an't no better feather-bed in all the county," said the old woman, setting down the light on a red chest which stood against the wall. "And I guess you're tired enough to sleep pretty well, an't you?"

So she left her, and Flora found herself alone at last.

She rose to bolt the door, but all the fastening it boasted was a clumsy iron latch. With the energy and strength of desperation, she dragged the chest across the floor, and barricaded the entrance with it. And then, woman-like, she sat down and began to cry.

"I never can sleep a wink!" she sobbed. "I will not even undress, for I am sure this is no other than a den of robbers!"

And she lay down on the outside of the bed, listening, with nervous trepidation, to every sound she heard.

But all was quiet and peaceful. The wind sighed softly through the tops of the tall trees; the summer insects kept up their clamorous concert, and from the distant woods a whippowil uttered her lonely plaint. Unconsciously the deep peace of the scene began to enter into Flora's excited temperament, and ere she knew it, she was fast asleep.

She was roused, at last, by the hum of voices, and sitting up on the bed with a start, she listened intently.

"Don't be a fool, Eben!" the old woman's cracked accents were uttering. "It's done in a minute."

"It's a job I ha'n't no fancy for," was the gruff answer.

"Night's the time, when all is asleep and quiet," urged the old crone. "One good blow, and 'tis done. Come! start quick! What are you standin' starin' for? You'll wake the gal, if you an't careful."

"Come on, then."

The stealthy footsteps advanced nearer and nearer to her room. Flora had sprung to her feet, and stood there, pale and palpitating; and as there was a momentary pause in front of the door, she dragged away the chest, burst open the latch, and flew screaming, past the old woman and her tall shock-headed coadjutor, down stairs.

Half a dozen men lay in different attitudes of repose on the floor, around the smouldering embers of the nearly dead fire; they all started up with one accord, when she burst in among them, white and wild.

"Eh! what's the matter?" ejaculated Joseph Kilp, rubbing his red hair frantically up as he sprang to his feet, staring around.

"Help me! Protect me!" shrieked poor Flora. "They are going to murder me—that old woman and the hideous man. I heard them say so. Oh, help! help! for Heaven's sake!"

"Murder you!" roared the man called Eben, who had by this time stridden down the stairs. "No sich thing. I was only agoin' to knock down a wasp's nest for Granny Hopkins, jist under the garret roof."

"That there plaguey wasp's nest that has troubled me all summer," croaked old Mrs. Hopkins. "Dear heart alive! there an't nobody going to harm you, child. We an't none of us robbers nor murderers, as I know of."

And Flora Montcalm, mortally terrified though she had been, could not help joining in the laugh that burst from all the swarthy giants round the fireplace.

"I am so sorry!" she faltered, hiding her face in her hands; "but I was dreadfully frightened."

"I guess you're a city gal," said the old woman, kindly patting her shoulder. "Go back to bed now, and get a good night's rest, and we'll leave the wasp's nest till some other time."

And Flora Montcalm obeyed.

She rewarded the honest farm folk well the next day, and left a gay garnet ring on Judith Ann's red stumpy finger; and when at last she reached the Gothic cottage among the Adirondacks, she had a mirthful tale to tell of her adventure at the Den of Robbers.

USED TO THE THING.

In order to fully appreciate the following you ought to know our Trial Justice. He is a youngish man; a pattern of propriety; very precise and ornate; of remarkably good presence; and he not only has a pretty good opinion of himself, but he has also a most exalted opinion of the judicial office he has been called to fill. No Lord Chief-Justice upon the King's Bench ever felt more weight of dignity under the ermine than does our Justice Bowerby.

Not long since a ragged, friend-forsaken fellow, named Mudkins, was brought before Bowerby, charged with having stolen a pair of boots. The constable who had arrested him had caught him in the very act, so that the fact of the stealing was undeniable. The case was clear, and the rogue admitted the gentle imputation; but he plead the extreme necessity of the case. His shoes were completely worn out, and he had no money with which to buy others; nor had he a friend to help him; nor had he been able to gain the needed apparel by begging.

"I had to do it, your honor, or go barefoot," he said, with earnest simplicity.

"And why not go barefoot?" replied the Justice, with dignity, and yet with a touch of asperity. "The weather is growing warmer, and the condition could not be a very great hardship. Do you realize the turpitude—the moral enormity—of the offence? Did you stop to reflect upon the nature of the crime, and its inevitable consequences? Why," continued the Judge, with a towering touch of moral grandeur, "rather than descend to stealing I would go barefoot all my life!"

"Very likely," retorted the culprit, with a smiling shrug, and with a coolness that was far removed from impudence,—"It all depends upon the way you've been brought up. *I have always been used to wearing shoes!*"

The audible smile that pervaded the court room was not required to convince Justice Bowerby that his great moral effort had fallen flat and profitless.

S. C., JR.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A PRACTICAL man visited a penitentiary to see if he could gather facts to use in a temperance lecture which he was preparing. "My friend," said he to the first prisoner whom he addressed, "did whiskey, or ardent spirits of any kind, have anything to do with bringing you here?" "You bet they did, old hoss." "How so?" "Why, the judge and jury that tried me were all drunk."

"JOHN, did you go around and ask how old Mrs. Jones is this morning, as I told you to do last night?" "Yes, sir." "Well, what's the result?" "She said that seeing as how you'd had the impudence to send to ask how old she was, she'd no objection to telling you that she's seventy-four."

IN an advertisement by a railroad company of unclaimed goods, the letter l dropped from the word lawful, and so the advertisement appropriately reads, "People to whom these packages are directed are notified to come forward and pay the awful charges on the same."

A UTAH settler was recently tried for scalping his wife, when the Judge remarked that "in the East, where he came from, instead of scalping their wives, men now load them down with false hair and kill them with kindness," whereat the audience laughed.

A GENTLEMAN was fretting about the loss of an overcoat and umbrella that had been stolen from his hall, and petulantly said, "Besides, it's such a waste of the articles, for the thief is pretty sure to go at last where he will need neither of them."

AMONG our national post-offices are the following: Ti Ti, Toto, Why Not, Pipe Stem, Stony Man, Sal Soda, Shickshiny, Snowshoes, Overalls, Lookout, Last Chance, Backbone, Marrow Bones, Sorrel Horse, Tally Ho, and Tired Creek.

JUDGE (to a prisoner)—"You are a notorious thief. You will steal anything. If you had a chance to steal now, WHAT would you steal?" *Prisoner*—"I'd steal away, your Honor."

AN author selected as the title of a new romance, "Wrecked in Port." His publisher looked sharply at the author's red nose, and muttered, "Yes, either Port or Burgundy."

THE daughter of a Maine lumberman, in referring to the recent failure of her father, stated the whole case by saying, "A sudden *rise* in the river swept our fortunes *down*."

WHEN the brave Prince de Conde was told that his enemies called him a deformity, he replied, "How do they know that? My enemies never yet saw my back!"

IT is said that blacksmiths and machinists are more or less given to *vices*, and that carpenters will *chisel* when they can get a chance and think the operation will pay.

A MAN with a well-worn manuscript under his arm remarked that he thought the most dangerous ship on which a man could embark was authorship.

"DON'T worry about my going away, my darling. Absence, you know, makes the heart grow fonder"—"Of somebody else," added the darling.

AN Ohio lawyer included in his bill against his client—"To waking up in the night and thinking about your case, ten dollars."

WHAT is the difference between a hill and a pill? One is sometimes hard to get up, and the other is often hard to get down.

WE respectfully remind the managers of the Boston Jubilee that mosquitoes are public singers that always "draw" well.

A BAKER has invented a new kind of yeast that makes his bread so light that a pound loaf weighs only twelve ounces.

AT certain directions taken by the trade winds, cautious merchants deem it prudent to reef their sales.

IN Massachusetts the legislative committee on the Hoosac tunnel is known as the committee of the hole.

IN setting up an account of a six-oared boat race, the compositor made it a six-eared goat race.

WHY is praising young ladies like a preparation of opium? Because it is laudin' 'em.

WHY is the letter l in the word military like a nose? Because it stands between two i's.

ABOUT the commonest social vice, and the one which is most abhorred, is advice.

"EXCUSE haste and a bad pen," as the pig said when he broke out.

CURRENT ITEMS.

THE Kansas City, Mo., *News* says a monster snake, about thirty feet long and as big around as a man's body, has been seen in Johnson county, Mo., on the ground and high up in the trees, and is exceedingly shy and afraid of the approach of man, as it always retreats, showing no disposition to attack any one, although those who have seen it say they tried no experiment to see how close they could come to it. It has been fired upon two or three times, but without effect as far as known. Sheep and good-sized calves have been missed by farmers in that section, and they attribute their disappearance to the snake.

A CELEBRATED brigand, named Ciccone, has just been identified in the person of a Neapolitan lawyer, named Rappone. Ciccone, who disappeared many years ago, had killed Rappone, taken possession of his papers, and established himself at Florence, under his victim's name and style. He was shrewd enough to be able to maintain the deception for several years, but, of course, was found out at last by a detective.

A LITTLE boy of Bradford, N. H., has a cat which recently lost a litter of kittens. A few days afterward the boy found a nest of three young squirrels, which he took home and gave to the cat, supposing she would kill and eat them. On the contrary, the cat took a wonderful liking to them, and seems to be as much pleased as though they were veritable kittens.

A SAD FATE.—A gentlemanly stranger exhibited symptoms of insanity, in Durham, Conn., a few days ago, and was taken charge of by a benevolent citizen. Every possible attention, professional and otherwise, was bestowed on him, but he soon died, without leaving any clue to his identity.

THE eastern section of Louisville, Ky., was thrown into a terrible state of excitement on Saturday night of last week, by a mad dog, which ran through three streets, biting ten or twelve persons, including several little children. Some persons were badly torn by the infuriated brute.

IT is said that during the month of May upward of twenty-five thousand buffaloes were killed on the Western plains, south of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, for the sake of their hides alone, which are worth but two dollars each.

A BIG RAFT.—The largest raft that ever came down the Mississippi is reported to have arrived at Rock Island the other day. It consisted of two million five hundred thousand feet of lumber and one million feet of laths.

A BOY was shooting at a mark the other day in South Bainbridge, and accidentally shot a little girl eight years of age, the bullet burying itself so deep in the child's breast as to elude the search of the physician.

A VISITOR at Newport attempted suicide a few mornings ago by trying to cut his throat with a table knife, but the implement was so dull that he did not succeed, though he mangled his throat in a shocking manner.

VERMONT is mourning the loss of its toads. They were killed by the excessive cold of last winter, and now the cut worms on which they fed are having it all their own way, and are doing great damage.

THE boilers of a Spanish steam-ship, which was lying in the port of Marseilles, exploded on Saturday of last week, destroying the vessel and killing forty-four passengers and eleven of the officers and crew.

MOSES and Aaron Wilcox were born the same day, married sisters, were partners in business at Twinsburg, Ohio, which is called after them, died on the same day, and were buried in one grave.

A JEALOUS woman in New Bedford tried to kill her husband with a butcher knife, on Wednesday of last week. The husband resisted her murderous efforts, and she was arrested and locked up.

THE locomotive of the express train on the Erie Railroad exploded near Hornelsville, on Saturday night, June 15th, instantly killing the fireman and mortally injuring the engineer.

IT is proposed to erect a statue of Elias Howe, the inventor of the sewing machine, in Central Park, the money to be contributed by ladies who have used the machine.

AT Anderson, S. C., an old man aged ninety, and his wife aged eighty-seven, died within an hour of each other, last week, after a married life of seventy years.

A YOUNG woman drowned herself in the Connecticut river, on Thursday of last week, because she was "tired out with illness and hard work."

"I HAVE DRANK MY LAST GLASS."

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

No, comrades, I thank you, not any for me;
My last chain is riven, henceforward I'm free!
I will go to my home and my children to-night
With no fumes of liquor their spirits to blight,
And with tears in my eyes, I will beg my poor wife
To forgive me the wreck I have made of her life!
"I have never refused you before!" Let that pass,
For I 've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass!

Just look at me now, boys, in rags and disgrace,
With my bleared, haggard eyes, and my red, bloated face!
Mark my faltering step and my weak, palsied hand,
And the mark on my brow that is worse than Cain's brand;
See my crownless old hat, and my elbows and knees
Alike warmed by the sun or chilled by the breeze;
Why, even the children will hoot as I pass—
But I 've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass!

You would hardly believe, boys, to look at me now,
That a mother's soft hand was once pressed on my brow,
When she kissed me, and blessed me, her darling, her pride,
Ere she lay down to rest by my dead father's side;
But with love in her eyes, she looked up to the sky,
Bidding *me* meet her *there*, and whispered, "Good-bye."
And I 'll *do* it, God helping! Your smile I let pass,
For I 've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass!

Ah! I reeled home last night—it was not very late,
For I 'd spent my last sixpence, and landlords won't wait
On a fellow who 's left every cent in their till,
And has pawned his last bed, their coffers to fill.
Oh! the torments I felt, and the pangs I endured!
And I begged for *one* glass—just *one* would have cured;
But they kicked me out doors!—I let that too pass,
For I 've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass!

At home, my pet Susie, with her soft golden hair,
I saw, through the window, just kneeling in prayer;
From her pale, bony hands, her torn sleeves were strung down,
While her feet, cold and bare, shrank beneath her scant gown;
And she prayed—prayed for *bread*, just a poor crust of bread,
For *one* crust—on her knees, my pet darling plead:
And *I heard*, with no penny to buy one, alas!
But I 've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass!

For Susie, my darling, my wee six-year-old,
Though fainting with hunger and shivering with cold,
There, on the bare floor, asked God to bless *me!*
And she said, "Don't cry, mamma! He will! for you see,
I *believe* what I ask for!" Then, sobered, I crept
Away from the house; and that night, when I slept,
Next my heart lay the PLEDGE!—You smile! Let it pass,
But I 've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass!

My darling child saved me! Her faith and her love
Are akin to my dear sainted mother's above!
I will make her words *true*, or I 'll die in the race,
And *sober* I 'll go to my last resting-place;
And *she* shall kneel there, and, weeping, thank God
No *drunkard* lies under that daisy-strewn sod!
Not a drop more of poison my lips shall e'er pass,
For I 've drank my last glass, boys,
I have drank my last glass!

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

HONOR'S DECISION.

On entering the Red House, Honor Glint was not suffered to go immediately to her own room. The door of the drawing-room was ajar, and as she paused in the hall to remove her hat and jacket, Mrs. Glint's voice, sharp and disagreeable, called to her. Honor obeyed the summons, and went into the drawing-room.

The lamps were lighted; the fire was burning brightly; and Mrs. Glint sat with her feet on the fender, her hands folded in her lap. She was no longer alone, her daughter Miss Milner having joined her. The latter was in the act of drawing the red silk curtains at the moment of Honor's entrance.

Miss Milner was a commonplace young woman, with a very ordinary face and figure, and a cloud of light curls which fell to her waist. She had, without grounds for it, an extraordinary amount of vanity, and was endowed with a jealous and envious disposition, indulgence of which gave a peevish and discontented expression to her countenance. Honor's beauty was an eyesore to her. Honor's brilliant wit and glowing fancies contrasting painfully with her sluggish intellect, inspired her with a hatred of Capt. Glint's adopted daughter. And finally, the fact that Capt. Glint nearly idolized Honor, and looked upon her as his heiress—a fact which Mrs. Glint had hastened to unfold to her daughter—filled her narrow soul with bitterness. Her envy and hatred of Honor, added to Mrs. Glint's ambition and greed, had brought about the state of affairs which had culminated in Honor's threatened dismissal from the house.

Mrs. Glint looked sharply at the young girl as she came into the room, and said austerely:

"You are out late, Honor. My daughter does not indulge in tramps about the country at so late an hour of the day as this. What would Captain Glint say? What will the neighbors say?"

Honor sat down wearily, and answered calmly:

"I have been across the fields, Madam. Mr. Moer came back with me as far as the paddock."

Mrs. Glint uplifted her hands in apparent horror.

"So you went out to meet him?" she exclaimed. "I am really shocked, Honor. I can scarcely believe the evidence of my ears."

"I did not go out to meet Mr. Moer," said Honor, her color rising. "Why should I make appointments to meet any one away from home when I can see them here? I went across the fields for a walk, and sat down upon a stile to rest and think. Mr. Moer saw me there, and came to speak to me, and as I arose at once to return he came with me."

"You need not tax your imagination for excuses, Honor," said Mrs. Glint coldly. "Your proceedings can be nothing to me. Whether you actually went out to meet Mr. Moer, or simply, as you say, to walk, does not concern me. I am not inclined to keep you here in helpless dependence upon my husband. I dare say he would support every beggar in the kingdom if he had only the means to do it. I cannot permit you longer to take advantage of his foolish and unthinking generosity. You are a pauper, and the sooner you realize the fact the better. It is my fixed belief that you are the child of that Margaret Cropsey who pretended to be simply your nurse. You have been educated beyond your sphere as a lady, and now, if you have any sense of gratitude or decency, you will support yourself."

The pale young face of Honor Glint retained its calm sweetness: only the sadness in her eyes deepened.

"Is this all you have to say to me, madam?" the girl asked half haughtily.

"It is not, Miss. I called you in to hear an extract from a letter which Clarette received to-day from an old school friend of hers who is now visiting down in Cornwall. Clarette read it to me during your absence. When I questioned you before you went out an hour or two ago concerning your matrimonial intentions, I asked you if you aspired to marry Sir Hugh Tregaron, the rich Cornish baronet. Your manner was such that I might almost have been led to believe that you did indulge in some such dream. Clarette's friend writes to her that Sir Hugh Tregaron is engaged to be married to a very wealthy lady of rank, and that preparations are making for the nuptials upon a scale of almost unprecedented magnificence."

Honor did not speak, and her face was averted. It seemed as if she had no personal interest in the communication.

"Oh, mamma!" murmured Miss Milner, in in an undertone. "You always exaggerate so. Caroline says that Sir Hugh Tregaron is making extensive improvements in his house and about his estate, and that people think he must be going to be married, but she does not say that he is even engaged—"

Mrs. Glint commanded her daughter to be silent by an imperious wave of her hand.

Unmoved as she had seemed at Mrs. Glint's communication, Honor had been for a brief period actually stunned by it. In the momentary blunting of her senses, when her eyes seemed suddenly blinded and a confused ringing obscured her hearing, Miss Milner's correction of Mrs. Glint's statement escaped her notice. But before Mrs. Glint could speak again, Honor regained her self-command sufficiently to arise from her chair, and to say with gentle, girlish dignity:

"I am glad to hear of anything that is likely to add to the happiness of Sir Hugh Tregaron. He came home from Alexandria upon the *Argonaut* when I was upon my trip with papa, and not over four months ago. I have not known him long, but he was very kind to me, and he is especially papa's friend. He has been here several times to see papa since he returned to England, and papa is very fond of him."

"And perhaps papa's pauper charge is also," sneered Mrs. Glint. "Sir Hugh has never been told your history, I am morally sure. He believes you to be Captain Glint's daughter by a former wife, and the Captain would not allow me to tell him the truth. The Captain said if Sir Hugh was only a friend to you, the truth about you did not concern him; but if Sir Hugh wanted to marry you, the Captain would tell him your story at the proper time. So there was nothing, you see, to prevent his offering you his hand if he had liked you, unless his pride had intervened. Even considering you as Captain Glint's own daughter, Sir Hugh Tregaron's marriage with you would have been a wretched misalliance. But if it should have happened that Sir Hugh had accidentally discovered your true history, he may consider, and very justly so, that Captain Glint is trying to foist you upon society and upon a husband under a false character. At any rate, whatever he thinks, he has shown pretty conclusively that he is not to be taken in by a nameless young woman."

Honor's pale face glowed with sudden scarlet.

"Had I deemed it necessary," she said, "I should certainly have told Sir Hugh Tregaron my story long ago. I had no idea of seeming other than I am. I have not made my history public because papa desired me not to do so. He said it was not necessary to take the world into our confidence, and so the fact that I am not Captain Glint's own daughter is known to very few. Sir Hugh is too noble to suspect me of attempting to foist myself upon him, or upon any one. He is my friend; he has never been more; and is as much my friend as ever. Is this all you have to say to me, Madam? Then I beg leave to go to my own room. Good-evening."

With a stately little nod of the pale golden head, Honor left the drawing-room without awaiting a reply, and went up to her own apartment.

Her rooms, comprising a sunny little sitting-room, an airy bed-chamber, and a bath-closet, were situated directly above the drawing-room and morning parlor.

These rooms did not possess the sumptuous character of the grand and lofty apartments into which the acknowledged heiress of Floyd Manor was being ushered at that very moment, but they were very cozy and pleasant.

The low walls were panelled in oak black as ebony with age, but this sombreness was relieved by a profusion of gilt-framed cabinet pictures, glowing bits of color from the hands of artists of acknowledged genius. The wide casement windows were draped with pale blue damask, which fell in heavy folds upon the floor. The carpet was new and bright, of a pale blue color, and the furniture was upholstered in the same delicate tint. The low wide mantel-shelf was of exquisitely carved oak, and supported two large and antique vases, also of pale blue. Under the mantel-piece, in a wide, low grate, a fire was burning, and before the fender an easy-chair was drawn up in the most inviting manner.

Honor looked about for her little maid, but the girl was not there. Then she came forward to the fire shivering, and sat down upon the hearth-rug, and strove to think calmly upon her position, and to come to a decision in regard to Darrel Moer's proposal of marriage to her.

Ten o'clock found her still undecided. Her little maid, an undersized, rosy-cheeked girl, a little younger than Honor, came up and undressed her as usual, and noticing the unusual gravity of her young mistress, was very affectionate in her intentions. This girl had been taken by Captain Glint from the Liverpool orphan asylum, and had been trained by the wife of one of the Captain's officers as a lady's maid. On Honor's return from school, the girl had been transferred to her, and had become devotedly attached to her young lady. She rejoiced in the unusual, but by no means unprecedented name of Lucky, and having no surname of her own, she was known, when a surname was required, as Lucky Banner, the latter name having been assumed out of compliment to the benefactor of the asylum, Mr. Harmood Banner. It was not one of the least of Honor's new anxieties, that her expulsion from the Red House would throw her maid upon the world, homeless and destitute as herself. She dismissed the girl as early as possible and went to bed, where she lay for hours meditating upon the sudden change in her lot, and endeavoring to come to some decision in regard to her future.

For the first time in her young life, she experienced a terrible sense of desolation and friendlessness.

"Papa will be distressed by all this," she thought, turning restlessly upon her pillow. "His domestic peace depends upon my withdrawal from his guardianship. His wife is of course many times nearer to him than I am, and if he were to turn her from his house in his anger at her treatment of me, scandal would make busy with his name—and perhaps also with mine. He has been the best of fathers to me, and I need not be less than a daughter to him if I earn my own living. It is settled that I cannot go to a hotel and await his return, and allow him to find a new home for me or bring me back to the Red House. What then can I do?"

She lay silent for a little while, with her eyes fixed upon her window, through which the pale light faintly entered, and presently her thoughts again shaped themselves into words.

"Sir Hugh Tregaron is nothing to me. He never spoke a word of love to me. Why should Mrs. Glint speak so to me of him? Mr. Moer is certainly very noble. He seemed to think none the less of me because I am nameless, and a child of charity. He loves me. He will give me the shelter of his honorable name; he will allow me to found schools for the poor, a hospital for old women, and an asylum for orphans. I like him; I respect him; I can easily grow to love him. If I marry him, Lucky can remain with me always, or until she marries. As his wife, my life can be one of loving charity and kindly deeds. Is it not my duty to marry him?"

Although she pondered the question for hours, she would not decide her fate that night.

When morning came and Lucky had lighted her fire and she arose, she was pale and wearied, but still undecided. She dressed herself with her maid's assistance, and then, knowing that the girl must soon hear of her proposed departure from the Red House, she told her of it with a calmness that surprised herself.

"You do not know it, Lucky," she continued, "but I am not Captain Glint's own daughter, only a poor girl whom he adopted as his own, and loved and cherished and educated. I love him better than my life, but perhaps I ought not longer to be an expense to him. I can go out as governess, but papa would then find me and bring me back, and that would not be advisable. I had last evening a proposal of marriage, Lucky, from Mr. Moer, the handsome, Italian looking gentleman who has been staying all winter at Lynshire Place, and who has visited the Red House so frequently. Mr. Moer is rich, and heir to a title, and as his wife I can do a great deal of good. And so—and so, Lucky," added the young mistress, walking to the window and looking down into the paddock, "I—I have decided to marry Mr. Moer."

The little maid was amazed.

"Mr. Moer is a handsome gentleman, Miss Honor," she exclaimed, "but I fancied you would marry Sir Hugh Tregaron. Miss Clarette means to catch him, and now she 'll surely make it out. When do you expect to be married, Miss?"

"This morning, Lucky. Mr. Moer will obtain a special license," said Honor, in a firmer tone, her mind now being quite made up. "You will go with me to church and witness my marriage. You need never leave me unless you choose. I must go down to breakfast presently, and while I am gone I want you to get out my blue silk suit. I shall wear that to be married in."

"But, Miss Honor, a bride should wear white—"

"I shall walk to church, Lucky. My marriage is not to be made public for a few weeks, as Mr. Moer wishes to inform his uncle of it before it is announced to others. It will be a very quiet marriage, you see, Lucky, but I trust it will be a happy one."

The maid accepted the decision of her young mistress as final, and offered no dissuasion. Honor presently descended to the breakfast room, where she was joined by Mrs. Glint and Miss Milner. After breakfast she returned to her rooms.

The March day was mild, and the sun was shining palely. Honor arrayed herself in a blue silk walking suit, the lower skirt having a flounce of blue velvet, and put on her dainty blue velvet jacket and hat. An ermine boa and muff gave effect to her costume.

Lucky donned her Sunday garments, and about a quarter before eleven o'clock the young mistress and her maid left the Red House, and set out upon their walk to Ivy Lane, at the nearest corner of which Honor had promised to meet her intending bridegroom. Their departure from the house was not observed either by Mrs. Glint or Miss Milner, and therefore excited no comment. They walked on leisurely and in silence, Honor's mood controlling that of her attendant.

A half mile of distance interposed between them and their destination. This was soon traversed, even at the rate at which they walked, and they turned into Ivy Lane just ten minutes after leaving the Red House.

Ivy Lane was a favorite resort for lovers of the humbler classes at a later hour of the day, and was simply a narrow carriage-way a quarter of a mile in length, connecting two principal streets. It was bordered on either side during its whole length by tall stone garden walls, whose tops bristled with broken bottles laid in cement, and whose sides were draped with ivy which covered them as with a garment. No house overlooked Ivy Lane, few carriages traversed it, and it was always in shadow save at midday.

A carriage, however, was now waiting within the lane. A coachman sat upon the box impatiently flickering his whip, and Mr. Darrel Moer was walking up and down in the shadow of the wall, awaiting Honor with impatience.

As she turned into the lane, he hurried toward her, all eagerness and anxiety. His dark, handsome face was glowing, his eyes full of questioning. Honor's maid fell back discreetly, and Mr. Moer seized Honor's hands in his, exclaiming:

"My darling, I have had a night of terrible suspense. What are you going to say to me? I have the license in my pocket, the church is open, and my man is waiting in it to serve as our second witness. I see you have brought your maid. What is my fate to be, Honor, darling? Am I to be the most blessed, or the most miserable of men?"

Honor withdrew her hands from his, and uplifted to him a pale, heroic face and eyes like burning lamps. She realized now as she had not done before, the importance of the step she meditated, but she had no thought of turning back. To the contrary, Moer's manner aroused within her a faint thrill of kindliness toward him which was the first kindling of affection. She did not dread marriage with him. Suddenly this marriage seemed to her a refuge, a stronghold, and her heart grew lighter as she said, blushing, yet smiling faintly:

"I am come to go to church with you, Mr. Moer. I told you last night that I did not love you, but I will be a true and faithful wife to you, and I am sure—I feel already—" and she stammered—"that is, I believe I shall love you."

"I know you will," cried Darrel Moer, his dark face beaming. "You have made me very happy, Honor. You shall never repent your faith in me. Come, my darling. Let me help you into the carriage."

He conducted her to the hired vehicle and assisted her into it, folding over her knees an embroidered lap robe. He held open the door while Lucky climbed in and seated herself opposite her young mistress, and he then followed her, closing the door, and seating himself beside the maid. Rapping upon the glass which intervened between him and the coachman, he gave the order:

"To the church. Be lively!"

The driver cracked his whip, the horses started, and the carriage rolled down the lane, proceeding swiftly toward the church.

CHAPTER VIII.

A STRANGE TURN OF AFFAIRS.

In that part of the town of Bolton-Le-Moors where the streets are narrowest, the houses thickest and the population densest, stands a little old chapel, quaint, dingy and weather-beaten. It is frequented for the most part by the factory people who live in the neighborhood, but its stained glass windows, its richly carved oaken pulpit and chancel railing, its ample pews, the marble tablets let into the walls and forming the flooring, bearing inscriptions to the memory of some knight or squire, some dame or lady, whose bodies have long since mouldered to dust in the vaults below—all these attest that, scores of years ago, this little old chapel was a fashionable place of worship. It looks lonely and deserted even in the midst of the bustle and stir of its humble surroundings, and its dusty aisles are seldom swept by rustling silks in these latter days.

It was this gray old chapel which Darrel Moer had selected as the scene of his marriage to Honor Glint. Its very quietness and seclusion had induced him to select it that morning when, after obtaining his license, he passed it in his cab on his way toward Ivy Lane. He had ordered his man to alight and to summon the clergyman, and to have all in readiness for the expected marriage, and he was now on his way to this place with his intended bride.

Both Honor and Darrel Moer were silent during their drive together to the chapel. Now that she had made up her mind to marry her Italian looking lover, Honor was conscious of a shy sense of pride and satisfaction in him, and with the lot she had chosen. Sir Hugh Tregaron had never spoken a word of love to her, and she had never dared to think of loving him, but Darrel Moer invited her affection by tender looks and protestations of love for her, and her desolate soul and her gratitude to him began to grow tenderer, and to take on the semblance of affection.

As for Moer, his thoughts were in a chaos during the drive. While Honor had held aloof from him, repulsing him by her half-haughty coldness, he had been wild to possess her as his wife. Her beauty bewitched and allured him as none other's had ever done, and he had even been ready to risk Lord Waldemar's displeasure, the wonder of his society friends, and to sink all his ambition to make a grand alliance, in order to make this young girl his wife. But now that the excitement of pursuit was over, now that she had consented to marry him, and they were actually on their way to be married, Darrel Moer's fickle heart failed him, and in his soul he called himself a fool and an idiot, and would at the last moment have withdrawn from his part of the contract, could he have done so decently.

"It 's not that I don't love her," he thought. "I do. I fairly worship her, but I need not have been in such mad haste about marrying her. She 's only a penniless, nameless girl, and I 'm heir to a title and to great estates, and I could marry almost whom I like. But it 's too late to draw back. I can't jilt the girl at the very altar, and, after all, her beauty will draw people of rank about her, and is a sort of patent of nobility in itself. I think Lord Waldemar will take to her and pet her, and make a sort of idol of her, and that will be pleasant for me, for the old fellow has rather been down upon me lately. He actually called me a selfish, mercenary rascal, when I went up to town the other day to see him during his illness. Honor will help me to strengthen my position with him, and Heaven knows it needs strengthening. He 's found out too many of my shortcomings lately. There is, of course, a great risk that Honor's doubtful descent will cause him to cast us both adrift, as he cast off Wallace and Janet. And that reminds me that I have been a consummate idiot to think of marrying a girl of unknown, and of course lowly, and very possibly, disgraceful parentage. By Jove! It seems as if I were just waking up. But how can I back out at this late moment?"

He glanced across at Honor, and met the full and steady gaze of her splendid eyes. And then, as the full glory of her loveliness appealed through his eyes to his soul, his infatuation for her was strengthened, and he was again conscious only of her beauty and his love for her.

As they drove up to the chapel at last, Darrel Moer's valet, who was standing under the arch of the closed door-way, came down and opened the door, and the bridegroom alighted, and assisted Honor also to alight. The maid clambered out by herself. Darrel Moer ordered the cabman to go away to a neighboring corner, in order that spectators might not be attracted into the church to witness the wedding. Then he hurried his party into the chapel, and his man closed the door after them.

There were present then in the church Darrel Moer and his man—a thin, sinister-faced, elderly fellow, who was already deep in his master's confidence—and Honor Glint and her maid Lucky, the gray-haired superannuated clerk, and an old woman who was the pew opener. The clergyman who was to officiate upon the occasion came out of the vestry in his full canonicals, and bowed gravely to the bridal pair, surveying them both with keen and comprehensive glances.

Darrel Moer led Honor toward the clergyman, who met them half-way, and Moer presented to him his marriage license, which he carefully perused.

While he was thus engaged, Honor looked at him closely. He was a young man, with a very high forehead and scanty allowance of hair, and with a countenance in which could be traced nothing of weakness nor passion. He had an austere expression, but his eyes had a saintly look in them, and, as Honor continued to regard him, he reminded her of pictures she had seen of holy martyrs who had died steadfast in the faith, and exulting even in the midst of physical anguish.

"This is all right," said the clergyman, when he had read the license to the very signatures. "I will marry you at once. I am in some haste, as I am expecting a double marriage party immediately, and they will probably be the last marriages at which I shall ever officiate in England," and he sighed.

"How is that, sir?" asked Darrel Moer.

"I leave to-morrow upon a mission to Africa, with a party of devoted clergymen sent out by our bishop to found churches among the heathen," replied the clergyman cheerfully. "Be kind enough to take your places before the altar, and we will proceed with the ceremony."

The superannuated clerk, who seemed quite deaf and purblind, yet placed the bridal pair in the proper place and attitude, and the marriage proceeded. The words were soon spoken that made Darrel Moer and Honor Glint one flesh—that wedded together two beings as unlike to each other as Darkness and Light, Truth and Treachery, Vice and Goodness.

And this marriage, so horribly unfitting, was but the dawn of evil days to Honor Glint. It was the commencement of a tragic drama whose end none could foresee.

The ceremony ended, the pew opener proceeded to open the chapel doors for the ingress of the expected bridal party, and the newly married pair, with their witnesses and the clergyman, went into the vestry to sign the marriage register.

This was soon done, and the register was locked up in the rickety old safe in which it was ordinarily kept. The clergyman wished all happiness to the blushing young bride; but in the midst of his congratulations to the newly wedded pair, he was summoned into the chapel to marry the two happy couples who had arrived with their train of friends.

There was a fire in the vestry grate, and Honor stood before it, stretching out her hands to the blaze. A sudden chill had come upon her that was like the chill of death.

"Bing," said Darrel Moer, addressing his valet, "go out and find our cab and bring it to the door."

The valet departed leisurely. He was not wont to hurry himself at any time, presuming probably upon the fact that he was too well versed in his master's secrets to fear discharge.

He had scarcely vanished when the pew opener appeared at the vestry door, ushering into the presence of the newly wedded pair a young man of decidedly rakish aspect, with bold eyes, a swaggering manner—evidently a "fast" and dissolute fellow.

This was Darrel Moer's intimate friend and host, the owner of Lynshire Place.

This young man approached Moer, even while his bold eyes fixed themselves admiringly upon Honor.

"I thought I should find you here, Moer," said the new-comer. "I've been to several chapels already. I knew you would not be in one of the dissenting churches. You ought to see my cab horse. He 's but one remove from death; I 've put him through so savagely. I see I'm here in time though. You 're waiting for the couples out there to get through, I suppose. Glad on your account I got here before the marriage, you know. A couple of letters have come for you marked 'in haste,' and by Jove, you know, I thought I'd hunt you up and give them to you with my own hands. They are not mourning letters, but then it 's quite possible Lord Waldemar is dying, though why they didn't telegraph—"

Darrel Moer started and turned white. There was a small room adjoining the vestry, and used as a wardrobe, study, or what not. It was lighted by a small window. Moer drew his friend into this room, and held out his hand, saying, as he closed the door that led into the vestry:

"Give me the letters, Carrington?"

His friend produced the letters, and gave them to him.

They had been posted the previous night from the village nearest Floyd Manor, in Yorkshire, and were addressed in the handwriting of Lord Waldemar's business manager, Nelson Grimrod. Moer recognized the handwriting immediately, and tore open one of the letters in an uncontrollable agitation and excitement.

"It's from Grimrod!" he exclaimed, his voice penetrating distinctly to the vestry and to the ears of his young bride, who had seated herself before the fire. "I—I cannot see a line, Carrington. The old man must be dying. And if he is—oh, curse the luck! No, he is not! Merciful Heaven, what does this mean? 'I write by Lord Waldemar's commond to inform you that the daughter of Wallace and Janet Floyd, both deceased, has arrived this evening at Floyd Manor, and has been acknowledged by his lordship as his granddaughter and heiress, the future Baroness Waldemar!' The furies! Wallace Floyd left a daughter! Wallace Floyd from his grave has reached out a hand to mock me, and to rob me of all I coveted. I—I cannot believe it!"

He sank down in a chair, ghastly and panting.

Carrington looked over his shoulder.

"The letter is dated last night," he said. "It has come through promptly. So the girl arrived at Floyd Manor last night and slipped into your place, while you were here making love to the little Glint. Lucky you 're not married to her yet, though she 's so deuced pretty I wouldn't have minded making her Mrs. Carrington at any minute, if she'd only taken a shine to me. What will you do? Leave Miss Honor, of course, and post off into Yorkshire? When a man's bread and butter are threatened, he must give love the go-by, you know."

Darrel Moer groaned aloud.

"It comes hard on you, and no wonder," said Carrington sympathetically. "But you haven't read your other letter. Perhaps that contains something to soften the blow."

Darrel Moer tore open the second letter in a sort of desperation, and read its contents eagerly. This letter had been written also by Lord Waldemar's business manager, and was a confidential one. It had been written after Grimrod's return from the Manor to his own house, had been posted with the other, and contained the following communications, which Carrington read aloud, as he leaned on Moer's shoulder:

"I am well aware, Mr. Moer, that you have counted upon succeeding my lord as the next Baron Waldemar and owner of all his great estates. I know that you have lived fully up to the generous income allowed you by my lord, and that you have even gone a long way beyond it, and have raised money on post-obits—a course which, if my lord knew it, would utterly alienate him from you. He has heard lately of various proceedings of yours, and is greatly incensed with you, so much so that he is about to change his will. He will leave all his property, entailed, freehold, and personal, to his granddaughter Miss Floyd, while to you he will leave an income of two hundred pounds a year.

"I have long been accustomed to regard you as the next Lord Waldemar, and I beg in this situation of affairs to offer you a few suggestions.

"Miss Floyd is a beautiful blonde, about seventeen years of age, a true Floyd in looks as in other respects. She is a young lady of fine presence, and will make a stir in London drawing-rooms. She is as yet heart whole, as I learned from her attendant; but she will be beset with suitors immediately. Such beauty allied to such wealth must attract a crowd of marrying men.

"Permit me to suggest, dear Mr. Moer, that you can retrieve your otherwise utterly ruined fortunes by marrying Lord Waldemar's heiress. Should you decide to pay court at the shrine of this new beauty, you will do well to come on to the Manor immediately; and whatever your decision, I entreat you to preserve this communication a secret, and to destroy this letter, as I risk my lord's displeasure in thus writing to you."

Here Darrel Moer paused in the perusal of the letter, crumpling it savagely in his hands.

"By Jove," said Carrington, "that Grimrod is a regular cove, you know, and his advice is good. You always had the happy faculty of being able to shift your affections with astonishing rapidity; so just give Miss Glint the slip, and hurry away to court this beautiful Yorkshire heiress."

"Carrington," cried Moer energetically, "I've been a cursed fool. I—I'm married already to Honor Glint. Curse her pretty face. It has lured me to my ruin. I 'm done for—completely done for. I've beggared myself for a girl's fair face."

He uttered a volley of oaths that made the young bride's blood run cold in her veins.

"You have done it!" ejaculated Carrington, with a whistle. "And now 'it 's all for love and the world well lost.' You 'll have to study for a profession—"

"I'm too old for that."

"Enter the army—"

"I hate the army."

"Get Lord Waldemar to give you a living, and then take holy orders."

"I won't. I like ease, and my own will. I won't work; I won't become a mere cypher in society; I won't prune my luxurious tastes. I will become what I believed myself already, Lord Waldemar's heir. I fairly hate the sight of Honor Glint, since it is to her I owe my prospective poverty. I cannot take her to Yorkshire. She is an incubus upon me. I am sick of her already. I will rid myself of her—"

"And marry the heiress?"

Darrel Moer arose abruptly, a sinister glow in his eyes, and a cruel smile on his thin lips.

At this juncture the clergyman entered the vestry with the two newly wedded couples and their friends, and close behind them came Moer's valet, announcing that his master's cab was in waiting.

Honor arose from the chair in which she had crouched, hearing all that had passed between Moer and his friend, and beckoned to her bewildered maid, saying:

"Come, Lucky. We will not wait."

White as any spirit, the young girl flitted out of the vestry door, followed closely by her attendant. They threaded the church and gained the street. Avoiding the waiting cabs, the young mistress and maid hurried up the street, turning the nearest corner.

They had scarcely disappeared from the chapel, when Darrel Moer and his friend re-entered the vestry. They saw at the first glance that the bride and her maid were gone.

"By Jove!" cried Carrington. "The girl must have heard the whole thing! The door is thin, you see. She's given you the slip, Moer."

Darrel Moer did not answer. One of the brides was signing her name to the register, and his eyes were fixed upon the page. He approached his valet, keeping a strange, sidelong glance upon the marriage register.

"Bing," he whispered softly, "I'll give you ten guineas if you'll manage to cut out that page for me. Hush! Not a word. Their backs'll be turned presently. In the confusion you may do it, or else you can contrive to get locked into the church, and you can break open the old safe and cut the leaf out at your leisure."

Without waiting for an answer, he turned to his friend who stood near him.

"Come, Carrington," he said, with a cruel gleam in his eyes. "The first thing to be done is to find my bride. Her tongue may attempt to work me mischief. She 'll have to learn that I'm her husband—and her master!"

They hurried from the church together.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—Sincerity is the basis of every manly virtue.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1872

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

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ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

Christianity and Trade—What is Duty in Business?

Were the principles and precepts of Christianity intended, and are they calculated for practical, every-day use, or are they only to be admired in theory?

And again, what are Christian principles? What is the true meaning of the great foundation doctrine of Christianity, "*All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.*"

These questions, which often occur to us, have been particularly suggested by an event which recently happened in this city.

Some parties were arrested and committed, or held to bail criminally, accused of purloining the business correspondence of the firm of PHELPS, DODGE & Co., dealers in metals.

This was all well so far. Such mousing scoundrels, when proved to be guilty, should be severely punished. But what we have to comment on, is the explanation which was given of the great value and importance to the firm in question of preserving the secrecy of their letters. It was alleged that if their schemes in trade were divulged, their operations would be defeated, and they would be deprived of very large profits.

Now the question is, whether it is right to conduct mercantile transactions on a basis which requires concealment, or whether the highest creed of morality and the doctrines of Christianity demand that plans of business should all be such as may safely be kept open as day.

We do not imply, by any means, that a man should blazon to the world all his personal affairs; but has he a right to conceal anything for the sake of advantage over his customers?

The firm that we refer to occupy, in some respects, rather an exceptional position. They are almost as prominent in church matters as in trade. It is sometimes vulgarly said of a fighting man that he "travels on his muscle." We would not say of Mr. DODGE that he travels on his religion; yet, while carrying on his trade in tin and copper, which it now appears requires so much secrecy, he traverses the globe and edifies both hemispheres with declamations on religion and temperance.

There are few questions of greater interest than the one which we have raised here. There is a doctrine of law, held to a certain limited extent still by courts of law more than by courts of equity, that the buyer must look out for himself. But whether, under the rule to *do as you would be done by*, the concealment from the other party of any fact important for him to know, is not prohibited, is a very grave inquiry.

Even in the Old Testament there seems to be an implied censure of what is considered "smartness" in dealing, in the following passage from Proverbs: "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." And many profane writers have held tenaciously to the doctrine that all concealment in trade is at variance with absolute honesty. Now the question recurs, What is Duty in Business, in such cases? We do not assume to dictate; we only say this is a question of momentous importance.

Mutual Accommodation.

Can any mortal assign a reason why we should not agree on some plan in New York by which the more gigantic wagons, drays and four-horse equipages of our carrying companies should take the avenues and streets running parallel with Broadway and Fifth Avenue, and so give a chance to the more frail and manageable vehicles in those thoroughfares?

It makes no one more amiable or happy to have a huge man-of-war bear down with crushing effect on the lighter craft that navigate—when they dare—those crowded waters, ladies starting and screaming, and the respective officers misapplying theological language on deck. We make no motion on the subject, but as they say in the Committees, we "throw it out." Will any one pick it up and make something of it? Or are all concerned engaged in picking up other things?

Three in a Year.

The *Poughkeepsie Press*, in noticing the death of EDWARD TRIPP, youngest son of the late Alderman TRIPP, who was killed by an accident on the Hudson River Railroad a few days ago, says:

> "The mother's anguish was heart-breaking. This is the third one of the family who has died suddenly within a year. Alderman Tripp, it will be remembered, died of heart disease, and Joseph Tripp was drowned near Hyde Park."

Born on a Wintry Day.

The *Clarksville* (Mo.) *Sentinel* commences an obituary notice of an old soldier of the war of 1812 thus: "He was born *on a wintry day* in December, 1797, among the hills of the old Granite State." The same journal announces the marriage of a young couple, "after a long and painful courtship!"

* * *

—In our next number, we shall publish a contribution by our great American poet, WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, being one of a series which Mr. BRYANT is writing expressly for the *Ledger*.

A Great Preacher.

The late Dr. NORMAN McLEOD, whose death at the age of sixty has attracted general notice, was a popular Scottish clergyman. But Scotland has always had many such. He was a Chaplain to the Queen. But so have been many men of whom posterity will not take much note. He was a popular author. But popular authorship many men and women attain.

Our regards to the memory of Dr. McLEOD found themselves on what he was as a teacher of the masses. He had a large congregation, to which he taught the theology of which Scotland makes so much. But he was more than a theologian. He was a large-brained, large-hearted man, in sympathy with men, understanding men, and capable of speaking directly to the hopes and fears of men of all classes—the lordly and the lowly.

He saw the value of teaching men in all true ways, and as they are able to bear it. Imagination he appreciated as a power, and fiction as a means of teaching; and who that has read "Wee Davie," and other tales of his, fails to see the use that can be made of such agencies?

He understood the power of the press, and for many years of a most laborious life, he was editor first of a most genial and cultivated religious magazine, and then of "Good Words," his aim in both being to inform men, in such tone and style as an intelligent Christian gentleman might employ in his intercourse with intelligent and inquiring persons, where his religion would not be given as a "lump of sugar," but like the sugar in the tea, would sweeten the whole. Himself eminently genial, human, and sympathetic, he produced by his own pen, and those whom he enlisted, an immense amount of pure, varied, and high-toned literary property, of which Great Britain had need; and all this while he was sedulous and effective as a parish minister. He preached to his people in the Barony parish with acceptance and usefulness, but he preached well also, and with laudable versatility, to hundreds of thousands outside. We call such a man a great preacher, and we mourn his loss.

Why Let Such Men Loose?

The following telegram appeared in the daily papers:

> "PHILADELPHIA, June 19.—Walter Williams, *alias* William Mitchell, who was convicted in Poughkeepsie in October, 1869, and who was one of the gang that escaped from Sing Sing last summer by means of a tug-boat, has been captured. When taken into custody he had on his person $21,800, in railroad and market bonds, stolen from the Iron and Glass Bank at Birmingham, Penn., last week."

What is the use of letting such a man loose, after his recapture, to commit new crimes, until he shall ultimately be convicted and imprisoned once more?

We would have prisons provided with plenty of room, and made comfortable in every way; but when men are bent upon living the life of criminals—when they have repeated their offences, and been re-convicted and re-sentenced—we do not see any good reason why they should be liberated again.

Why should not the law require that confirmed criminals should be imprisoned for life?

Do not torture them, as they are tortured now. Do not overtask them; but make them work industriously and profitably.

Give them books and papers to read, and provide for them other means of improvement. But it seems to us fool-hardiness to let them loose on the community every few months, or every few years. Why should it be done?

It is not pleasant to any person to have his property stolen. He prefers to keep it or to give it away.

Yet confirmed burglars and thieves are morally—or immorally, perhaps we should say—to stick to their occupation. It seems to us the law should not afford them the opportunity. Once shut up, let them be kept shut up—well fed, comfortably clothed, and supplied with abundant facilities for improvement.

We do not see why honest labor should be subjected to the tax of convicting them over and over, and over again.

Be Moderate, Gentlemen.

Not having any presidential aims for ourselves, and not being a party organ, we venture to submit to the candid consideration of our influential friends of all parties, whether they do not sometimes forget what is due to the nation in the vehement eagerness of party struggle. If gentlemen—gentlemen, mind you, who love and tell truth—on either side, are to be believed, there is neither honor, principle, sense nor decency on the other. But do we believe that? Do we want the rest of the civilized world to believe that? No? Then let us not convey it. What is to hinder an orator saying, "Our opponents, gentlemen, are excellent men, and good citizens, but their policy is less wise than ours, as we shall now proceed to show?" We suggest this new and improved method; we do not propose to patent it, and shall not even expect the thanks of Congress for our contribution to the national reputation.

More especially when distinguished persons are canvassed, whose reputation is national property, we counsel moderation. Before enumerating all their vices, we propose that our orators prefix a little catalogue of admitted virtues, so that posterity, studying, as of course posterity will sedulously study, *The Forked Tree Democratic Flag*, and the *Yellow-mud Republican Trumpet*, may not take all the Americans of this generation for fools or felons.

The Island of Desolation.

Kerguelen Land, the large and solitary island near the middle of the Antarctic Ocean described in the opening chapters of THE PLOT AGAINST HAWLEY, by Mr. LEON LEWIS, in this number of the *Ledger*, and the scene of some of the most stirring incidents of the story, has recently attracted much attention from scientific men. It is announced that the British government, upon the recommendation of the Astronomer Royal, has selected it as a station for one of the astronomical expeditions which are to be sent out from England to observe the transit of the planet Venus across the sun's disc, in the year 1874. A knowledge of this fact will add to the interest felt by our readers in Mr. LEWIS' powerful tale.

* * *

MODERN READING OF A SCRIPTURAL COMMANDMENT.—*Do* others as they would *do* you, if they had a chance. How in contrast with this is the admonition administered in the following words:

> "Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation."

SUNSETS.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

One of the miseries of living in the city is the want of a horizon, and of a heavens above you. You do not see the earth line, or ocean line, of the horizon. The sun rises upon horizons of roofs and chimneys; it goes down behind red bricks. A child brought up in the city, doubtless supposes that the heavens are of the shape of the streets in his neighborhood. When he looks up, he sees an immensely elongated parallelogram, framed to his eye by the walls of the street. Now and then, perhaps, he sees a section of the true horizon at the end of some street.

One of the blessings of living on the western side of Brooklyn Heights is the demisemi heavens which we have to the westward. We never have a sunrise, but sunsets are plenty; and there is this advantage of sunsets over sunrises, that people are usually awake, and able to witness the phenomenon. The major part of people well born and prosperous, never saw a sunrise in summer, or, if ever at all, only as a sequel to a night watch with a sick friend, or upon an early start on some journey. For ourselves, we *have* seen a sunrise repeatedly, though never in Brooklyn. We have been up when it got up, but could see nothing for the houses. In the country it is different. There, not exceedingly often, yet often enough to justify the statement that we are well acquainted with sunrises, we have seen the early light brighten and brighten unto the perfect day, with all the accompaniments, brilliant clouds, lights here and there tipping the shadowed hills, the wild singing of birds, and the crowing of conceited cocks far and near, "who think the sun rises just to hear *them* crow."

But sunsets are no rarities, not luxuries, but necessaries of life—a kind of daily bread of heaven—and bounteously furnished to those living on Brooklyn Heights, whose eyes own half the hemisphere, and all the Orange mountains, and the low level line of Jersey.

We have often wondered that more has not been made of this common possession. We suppose that others have been withheld from fear that it would raise the taxes. On every earthly thing taxes will lie, and we marvel that such an eminent property as an undivided interest in one quarter of the heavens, has not yet been taxed. Until recently, government insisted upon putting its stamp upon everything, and we watched with solicitude lest it should tax conversion, and put a stamp on every one who joined the church. But in the recent great remission and abolition of taxes, that fear has passed away. But the city of Brooklyn has not remitted taxes. The notabilities have too heavy jobs on hand, whose profits are to be drawn from taxes. And so, Mr. BONNER, I should be unwilling to have the assessors know what a view I have in the west. They would instantly put on foot measures to tax those "mansions in the skies" to which so many of us "can read our titles clear."

But I had rather pay taxes on it than to lose it. Across that border, the sun, like a strong man returned from war, goes laden with spoils! With what prodigal indulgence does he display his wealth! Here only is ostentation in glorious good taste. It may well make one sick of pictures to have such an aerial canvas metalled with frescoes that come and go with endless wealth of beauty. The effect is not marred by the sad contrast of the huge city that grinds and groans beneath, unconscious of the magnificence that fills the heavens above it. What a poverty of riches is there in Wall street! What riches of glory right above it, for all that have eyes to see and a heart to understand!

Two sunsets there have been this week, to have missed which would be to me more than a life-long misfortune. Rising boldly out from below the horizon line, stood a black and gloomy range of mountain clouds, diversified with every conceivable peak, but all bald, and many of them with an edge of brilliant fire—just an edge, a mere line, and all below black, vast, cavernous. Then above spread out a serene field, orange, yellow, apple-green—smooth, without a wisp of vapor—without a single form; a depth of color, serene, radiant, as if the eye penetrated at length to the glory of the great world beyond. Above all this came down from the zenith layer upon layer of loose and watery clouds, a mighty thatch of gorgeous fleece, each layer taking on some new hue of gold or pink, and reflecting the whole air full of wondrous light. A half hour's vision. Then the mountains sank, the tranquil sphere drew back, the troops of colored clouds far up rode without plume or banner into the night, and no one could tell whence all this glory had come, or whither it went. Thank God I am not a painter! A few such sights would strike admiration and despair into a true artist's heart.

Strange Spectacle in a School-House.

A strange sight was presented in a school-house in the vicinity of Buffalo on the sixteenth of June. It was the body of a murdered woman. The schoolmistress closed the room carefully on Friday afternoon, when she dismissed her school for the week.

On Sunday morning it happened that a son of one of the trustees was sent to the school-house to get some ink, when to his horror he discovered the body of a strange woman lying on the floor. She had been taken in through one of the windows, whether before or after she was killed, did not appear.

What a horrible association to be connected forever hereafter with a place used as a school-room!

Tichborne Persevering.

The TICHBORNE claimant seems in nowise disheartened by the unsuccessful result of his first trial. He is holding public meetings of his sympathizers, and raising money by charging for admission. They are largely attended. During one of these meetings, Mrs. FITZPATRICK, an old servant of the TICHBORNE family, came forward, and, forcing her way to the platform, shook hands with the claimant, stating that she recognized him as the Sir ROGER TICHBORNE whom she had known in her youth. A groom and two women, who formerly lived in the TICHBORNE family, have also declared their belief that he is the genuine SIR ROGER.

A Lazy Man.

The Poughkeepsie *Press* takes the following view of laziness:

> "A lazy man is never tormented by harassing suspicion or worrying care. All the world's annoyances are to him but water, and he is a duck's back. Fate has no significance to him. The future he is too indolent to think about, and so that don't worry him. Poets in all ages have sung of the beauty of contentment; but what man ever had a contented mind but a lazy man? It is your active, troubled, rat-terrier sort of people that are discontented. They bustle about, turn the world upside down, and worry everybody and everything. A genuine lazy man, on the contrary, is always good-natured, and of a forgiving disposition. He wouldn't harbor revenge, because it would take too much trouble. So he forgives and forgets because it is an exertion to do anything else. Energy is a good thing to talk about—it is like prescribing medicine for another to take—but for solid comfort there is nothing like lying in the grass and taking it easy."

* * *

—As the soil, however rich it may be, cannot be productive without culture, so the mind, without cultivation, can never produce good fruit.

MABEL'S MISSION.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Far down in the shady old garden,
  Where shadows are gathered to die,
On the myrtle, down-trodden, knelt Mabel,
  With face lifted up to the sky.
The bird in the maple was quiet,
  Looking down on the fair little maid,
And listened in decorous silence,
  While fervently thus Mabel prayed:

"More work for these too idle fingers,
  More work for this body and brain,
Some task for this God-given spirit,
  Some goal to be entered through pain:
Far out on the wide burning desert,
  Away over mountain and sea;
Oh, show me, Lord, truly my mission,
  Some path that will lead me to Thee."

The bird heard the prayer, full of wonder;
  He knew of the sorrows and cares
That clustered the home shadows under,
  Unheeded and trifling affairs.
No shine on the commonplace duty,
  To tell it was known up above;
No sign of a saintship in waiting
  For Patience and hard-tested Love.

Two mother hands nerveless and weary,
  Unable their burdens to bear,
As they waver and tremble and falter
  Beneath the high pressure of care;
While Freddy, poor pain-smitten darling,
  Breathes gently a pitiful moan,
And waits in the gathering shadow
  The while, in his suffering alone.

And grandfather's queer childish fancies,
  Unwatched, lead to fearful mishap;
Grandmother finds real discomfort
  In crumples in kerchief and cap;
Poor Jack, fighting terrible fractions,
  The school-boy's implacable foe,
Calls loudly for Mabel. She listens,
  And straightway her temples lie low.

Oh, see at your feet, little Mabel,
  Yon path winding up to yon door!
Oh, seek in the isles of the ocean
  For God-given duties no more.
In the quiet home-lighted horizon
  You bound with the sound of a hymn;
God garners the sheaf of the present,
  And duties beyond it are dim.

THE BEST BOOK TO READ FIRST.

BY JUDGE CLARK.

"The best book to read first?" said Judge T., repeating the question I put on entering his office as a law student—

"*That's* the best book to read first—and last, too," he added, laying his hand on a well-thumbed "King James' Bible," on which less dust had been suffered to accumulate than I have often seen on the same volume on a "professor's" parlor table.

"But I didn't come here to learn to *preach*," I answered, a little pertly.

"Yes, you *did*," replied the Judge. "And the better you preach every time you get before a jury, the better you'll succeed.

"I'll prove it," said he quickly, noting my look of incredulity.

And wheeling round his chair, bringing his legs to a cross, and using his ear for a pen-rack, he proceeded:

"The first year after my 'admission,' I was elected State's Attorney. My maiden case was one of petit-larceny. Bill Dawkes, one of those trifling, 'good' sort of fellows—so called because good for nothing—had been found in 'recent possession' of a carcass of mutton, which the owner had left hanging out over night, and which '*non fuit inventum*,' that is to say, 'turned up missing,' in the morning.

"I drafted the indictment with great care, charging, with painful particularity, that one William Dawkes, yeoman, not having the fear, etc., but moved and seduced by a certain personage whom it was then common to include in every indictment as an 'accessory before the fact,' on, etc., at, etc., one carcass of mutton, of the value, etc., of the goods, chattels and personal property of one Pelatiah Potts, out of the possession, and against the will of the said Pelatiah, feloniously, and with force and arms, did steal, take and carry away.

"'What's the matter?' I asked sharply, when my friend Bob C. burst out laughing on hearing read over this, my first professional production.

"'It's the best joke of the season!" said Bob, with another guffaw.

"'What is?'

"'Why, that pun—calling a sheep thief a *yeo*-man.'

"My office was a scene of confusion at the end of five minutes. Bob's head had gone through the glass door of my bookcase; two of my three chairs lay with broken legs; and Bob and I had a pair of black eyes between us. It was more than a month before either spoke to the other.

"But I'm wandering from the point.

"In due time the prisoner was brought up for trial, Old Polifox appearing for the defence.

"Old P. was a character. The only law-book he had ever read was 'Swan's Treatise for Justices of the Peace;' but in *that*, and the Scriptures, he was powerful. He had a way of quoting and applying the latter which, in a religious community, made it difficult to oppose him without incurring a suspicion of want of orthodoxy. His *forte* lay in carrying the jury, whom he generally succeeded in convincing that he and they were on one side, and his adversary on the other. His style and grammar were original.

"I had set my heart on winning that case. If I could only beat Old Polifox before a jury, *my* cap would be feathered.

"I had carefully written out my 'opening;' and when I read it over to Nellie Wynne, to whom I was 'paying attention' at the time, she said it was 'real nice,' which, I knew, was feminine for '*bully!*'—an encomium I felt not a little proud of.

"When the case came on, I 'spoke my piece' without a blunder. I cited many authorities to prove that he in whose possession stolen property is found soon after the theft, is, in law, presumed to be the thief. I was prepared to prove, I said, that the property in question had disappeared at the dead hour of night, when all honest people were in their beds, and had been found, at early dawn, in the smoke-house of Dawkes, the defendant.

"I put my witnesses on the stand, and proved the ownership, value and identity of the property, its mysterious disappearance and subsequent reappearance in the constructive possession of the prisoner, and 'rested.'

"Old Polifox sat in solemn silence, his eyes closed, and his red bandana over his head. He asked no questions, and called no witnesses. I was disappointed at the old fellow's giving in so easily. It would take away half the glory of my triumph.

"But I was reckoning without my host.

"Old Polifox slowly got upon his legs, and removing his bandana, and taking up the Bible on which the clerk had sworn the witnesses, began:

"'I am grieved, my breethering'—he always called the jury his 'breethering'—'I am grieved and sore amazed to hear sech heathenish doctrines in a Christian court-house as we've jest been a listenin' to. What sez the sackred volume I hold in my hand? Why, it sez, 'At the mouth of *two witnesses* let every matter be established.' Now, my breethering, let me ask, what *two* witnesses—what *one* witness seed my client hook this sheep? Echo answers, '*Nary one!*' My delooded young brother has read from prefane authors to show that findin' of goods on the wrong man's primises is proof of his stealin' of 'em. It's a 'persumption of law,' he says, and a great piece of persumption it is, my breethering. Now, in this same sackred volume, we hev norated a case in pint—that of one Benjamin, which you've all hearn about. A silver cup, wuth a hundred times this trumpery sheep, was diskivered, not 'way off in Benjamin's smoke-house, whar Benjamin moughtn't a ben for a week, but *chucked into the mouth of the very sack he was ridin' onto*. And yet, my breethering, the Bible tells us Benjamin was innocent. But, my breethering, if it was Benjamin's luck instid of my misfortunate client's to be this day on trial before you, you would be obleeged, according to my onexperienced brother, to bring him in guilty, in spite of Scripter, and consign him to a place whar he'd hev to wear a coat of many colors of a very different stripe from his brother Joseph's.'

"I not only lost the case," said the Judge, "but my office at the next election—my attempt to confute old Polifox's Scripture argument creating a doubt, in the mind of the community, as to the soundness of my religious views.

"In all soberness," the Judge continued, "if you want to be a successful lawyer, 'search the Scriptures.' In them you will find the basis of all that is best and noblest in human laws. Besides, the words and phrases of the Bible are the language of the popular heart. Its parables are household words. Its illustrations never miss the mark. I have given you a ludicrous instance of their effect; but it is in the field of pathos and real feeling that their power is irresistible."

"And yet," I remarked, "Old Polifox made them the instrument of gaining an erroneous verdict."

"There you are mistaken," said the Judge. "It transpired subsequently that poor Dawkes was really innocent—a private enemy, the same person who first directed suspicion toward him, having abstracted the property, and placed it, through malice, where it was afterward found."

I took the Judge's advice as to the best book to read first.

MEDICINE BY WHOLESALE.

It is unaccountable how little people value health until they have lost it; how recklessly they will sit in wet garments and damp shoes; and stay in polluted, unventilated apartments, and wear thick clothes when they should wear thin, and *vice versa*; and then, when the inevitable penalty comes, in the shape of torturing pains, how madly they will swallow every specific ever trumped up, and warranted to cure every disease that flesh is heir to, without regard to symptoms or constitutional tendencies.

And here comes in the quack's harvest, reaped over the wide field of man's credulity. Who knows but this last discovery may be the very thing that will "set them up?" So it is swallowed with a faith that would be quite touching, had it not its ludicrous side in the long procession of pills, plasters and potions that have preceded it: some—harmless as brown bread and colored water could make them; others compounded with a recklessness worthy of eternal punishment in this or any other world, discovered or undiscovered.

Meantime the quacks ride "four in hand" through a gaping world, dashing carelessly past the hearses that slowly bear their victims to the "long home."

For all this, surely that day will come when inherited *health* will be a thousand-fold more precious a legacy than inherited *wealth*; that day when quacks will find their proper level; and common-sense and wholesome food and judicious exercise and free ventilation, will supersede the whole inflicted race of them.

FANNY FERN.

The Mystery of Death—Where is our Little Pet?

How natural are the following reflections and questionings, by a parent, in reference to a deceased child, which we copy from the *Atchison* (Kansas) *Champion!*

"Where are you, our little Pet? Do you lie all unconscious where we weeping let you down a few days ago? Or have you gone to the spirit world? And what is a spirit world? How can you live, feel, see, know, without that little casket the body? And if your spirit has flown, whither has it flown? How far away have you gone, little Pet? Do you know anything that is going on here below? And if so, how much are you permitted to know, and how do you know it? Do you see yourself, or do the angels tell you? Do you know how much we grieve for you, how many sad tears we shed, how we try to sing some of those home songs, in which your little voice used to mingle, and how we suddenly cease and all weep aloud? Do you see us when we go to visit your little grave, and do you hear us as we talk of planting the flowers, and placing the green sod, and erecting the little marble block there?

"Are you happy, little Pet? You used to say that you 'would like to go to Heaven, but that you would jump down again and come back.' Do you feel like jumping down now? You used to say you 'wanted to go to Heaven, but you did not want wings.' Have you got wings now, little Pet? But oh, how we miss you, little Pet! you were the light and joy of our household, and we all feel very lonely without you! Yet if you are only cared for tenderly and are happy, we can wait. But we should like to more than *believe*. We should like to *know*. If we could only hear from you one clear, distinct *Yes!* to these various queries so often made, so there could be no mistake about it, it would be very consoling. But we know you cannot answer. The curtain between this and the future world is down, never to be lifted until we each one makes his exit.

"'The gates are not ajar,' and if we are faithful here it will be well with us there, and we shall go and meet the good and the innocent—the dear ones gone before. Adieu then, little Pet! Ah! yes, we have said it many times before, but it comes back again upon us, and so we alternate

"'Between the calming and the weeping.'

Farewell, little Pet, for this side of Heaven. And how many like us have been afflicted! How many little coffins have been made! How many little graves have been dug, and how many sweet, pleasant homes have been darkened! But they have gone in sweet, beautiful and heavenly innocency. It must be well with them. Is it well with us? 'They will not return to us; shall we go to them?'"

Sure Cure for Hydrophobia.

[From the Norristown (Pa.) Free Press.]

Hydrophobia can be prevented, and I will give you what is known to be an infallible remedy, if properly administered, for man and beast; a dose for a horse or cow should be about four times as great as for a person. It is not too late to give the medicine any time before the spasms come on. The first dose for a person is 1½ oz. of elecampane root, bruised, put in a pint of new milk, reduced to one half by boiling, then taken all at one dose in the morning, fasting until afternoon, or at least a very light diet after several hours have elapsed. The second dose the same as the first, except take 2 oz. of the root; third dose same as the last, to be taken every other day. Three doses are all that is needed, and there need be no fear.

This I know from my own experience, and I know of a number of other cases where it has been entirely successful. This is no guess-work. These persons that I allude to were bitten by their own rabid dogs, that had been bitten by rabid dogs, and were penned up to see if they would go mad; they did go mad, and did bite the persons. This remedy has been used in and about Philadelphia for forty years or longer, with great success, and is known as the Goodman remedy. I am acquainted with a physician who told me that he knows of its use for more than thirty years, but never knew a case that failed where it was properly administered. Among other cases he mentioned, was one where a number of cows had been bitten by a mad dog; to half the number they administered this remedy, to the other half, not; the latter all died with hydrophobia, while those that took the elecampane and milk showed no signs of the disease.

R. C. SHOEMAKER.

Montgomery County, Pa.

DON'T TAKE IT TO HEART.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

There's many a trouble would break like a bubble,
And into the waters of Lethe depart,
Did we not rehearse it, and tenderly nurse it,
And give it a permanent home in the heart.

There's many a sorrow would vanish to-morrow,
Were we not unwilling to furnish the wings;
So, daily intruding and quietly brooding,
It hatches out all sorts of horrible things.

There's many a pleasure might prove a sweet treasure,
Did we in our hearts let it bourgeon and bloom;
But joys that invite us will flourish to spite us,
And laugh at our foolish surrender to gloom.

There's many a trifle whose growth we might stifle
With laugh, or with joke, or more delicate art;
But careful to nourish, 'twill rapidly flourish,
And seem like a mountain of fire on the heart.

Give wings then to sorrow, and draw from to-morrow
The sunshine to scatter the grief that annoys;
This world would be brighter, our hearts would be lighter,
Thought we less of our sorrows and more of our joys.

* * *

THE BLACK DOCTOR;

OR, THE

Prophecy of the Voodoo King.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE SPANISH RULE IN LOUISIANA.

By WILLIAM HENRY PECK,
Professor of History in the University of the State of Louisiana.

[This story was commenced in the *Ledger* two weeks ago, and in order that *new* readers may understand it just as though they had read it all, we will give a synopsis of the chapters already published. Madame Varlville, a rich widow of New Orleans, was poisoned by a subtle drug, and her life was saved by Adraste Scipian, a Voodoo doctor, after other physicians had given her up for dead. Her attendant was a mulattress, of middle age, named Mercita, who seemed to be far above her station, as she was highly educated, and spoke and wrote several languages. She had been sold to Madame Varlville several years before, by a Cuban slave-trader named Sancho Perez, who had brought her from Havana to New Orleans by the written command of a mysterious woman named Isadora Raymundo, whom he dared not disobey, as she showed him that she knew of his having murdered his former mate, Angelos Rio. On returning to Cuba, Perez secretly landed at Cardenas, instead of Havana, so as to escape from Isadora Raymundo; but he had hardly got ashore, when he was arrested for the murder, by an order signed by the Captain-General. It turned out, however, that the order was a forgery. When Perez learned this, he was in great spirits; but when the turnkey, who gave him the information, told him that the forger was Isadora Raymundo, he became suddenly silent. *Why* he was thus affected, will appear in the following chapter.]

CHAPTER V.

MORE ABOUT SANCHO PEREZ.

A new train of thought had suddenly struck the mind of the slave trader, and so forcibly that laughter at the jest of the turnkey was at the moment impossible. He had in the very beginning formed the opinion that the writer of the note which contained the note on the Bank of Spain for twelve thousand reals, was a woman; and he was one of those dogged fellows who cling tenaciously to a first opinion. The subsequent letters, signed Isadora Raymundo, had made him firm in the belief that the unknown was a woman.

On being told that the order for his arrest was a forgery, joy at his supposed escape from appearing before the Captain-General as a man accused of a deed of which he knew he was guilty, had delayed him from reflecting upon the fact that the order was a forgery. Now, hearing that his unknown Isadora Raymundo was the forger, this thought flashed into his mind:

"If Isadora Raymundo *knew* that I killed Angelos Rio and threw his body into the sea, and could prove the deed upon me, and desired my arrest, why did she forge an order for my arrest, when she could have easily obtained one from the Captain-General by a simple affidavit? I begin to see that I have been a fool. Isadora Raymundo—whoever she is—did not, and does not know that I made way with Angelos Rio; did not, and does not know that Rio was murdered by any one. She may be convinced now that he was killed, and by me, since my guilty fear made me hasty in obeying an anonymous order; but she cannot prove the charge. She wanted me to serve her. She sent the bank-note to tempt my cupidity, and the threat to scare me into haste to obey her. I might refuse to heed the threat, if I were innocent; but then I might obey to earn the money. But already the money was in my hands! Oh, she is a mystery beyond my comprehension. She must have known something about me, or she would not have guessed that I was guilty of the murder of Angelos Rio. But who is she? It is plain that she desired a certain secrecy in selling the woman Mercita. Why? That I must find out—"

"You are very silent, Captain," said the turnkey, at length, surprised by the sudden taciturnity of his prisoner.

"Oh, that is true," replied Perez briskly. "I was thinking—in fact, I was wondering how this mysterious Senora Raymundo obtained a genuine official signature of the Captain-General; and then, since you say it is known beyond a doubt that she forged the order, how it can be that nobody, not even the Captain-General, knows who Senora Raymundo is."

"I will explain that, Captain," replied the turnkey. "Some weeks ago—in fact, to be exact, on the fifteenth of April—"

"The fifteenth?"

"The fifteenth, Captain."

"That was the day after I arrived with *The Doubloon* from San Domingo. Go on."

"On the fifteenth a lady obtained an interview with the Captain-General—a private interview. No one saw her face except the Captain-General himself, as she entered the palace deeply vailed. She told him her name was Isadora Raymundo; that she wished to apply for the situation of English governess in some noble family—she did not name any particular family—and that she had called to ask him to sign a paper which certified simply that she, Isadora Raymundo, was perfectly acquainted with the English language. That was all she asked of the Viceroy—only his official signature to the paper she placed before him. The Viceroy prides himself upon his knowledge of English. He saw immediately that the lady was indeed perfect in that language. He is gallant to all ladies, too, and benevolent, as all know. He yielded to her request, or rather her petition, and placed his official signature to the paper, which certified only that Senora Isadora Raymundo was well able to teach the English language."

"But why his official signature?" asked Perez.

"Because the lady said it would greatly aid her in obtaining the situation she desired, Captain."

"Ah!" said Perez, biting his nails. "Of course—the cockatrice!"

"All of the official signatures of the Captain-General are recorded," continued the turnkey. "So it has been very easy for him to find how, when and where he gave any. An examination of the spurious order for your arrest has proved that the writing which was upon the paper when the Captain-General signed it, was afterward removed by some acid, and an order for your arrest filled in."

"Oh!" exclaimed Perez, still biting his nails. "But how did it chance that the Captain of Cardenas had that spurious order ready to be served on me?"

"One of your crew gave a sealed package to Captain Santaz. In it was the spurious order, Captain."

"One of my crew!"

"Yes—a sailor of *The Doubloon*."

"Diablos!" cried Perez, greatly amazed. "One of my crew! Who?"

"Lopez Soares."

"Ha! the fellow I knocked down for prowling too near the door of my cabin, on the voyage to New Orleans," thought Perez, gnawing at his nails. "But," said he to the turnkey, "who gave the sealed package to Lopez Soares?"

"That is not known, Captain. As soon as it reached his ears that you were arrested, he disappeared. Nor has he been heard of since—But some one is calling me," said the turnkey suddenly, as he heard his name shouted in the corridor, and he instantly left the cell.

"Now what am I to think of all this?" reflected Perez, more bewildered than ever. "Lopez Soares must have been a secret agent of this infernal Senora Raymundo. Where and when did he receive that spurious order, and from whom? Here in Havana before the *Doubloon* sailed for New Orleans, or in New Orleans? From Senora Raymundo, or from an agent of hers in New Orleans?"

His meditations were speedily interrupted by the return of the turnkey, who was followed by the Governor of the prison.

The prison governor was a dark and severe man, with a cold and cruel eye, and a large, harsh mouth. He said to Perez in a stern voice:

"Who is Isadora Raymundo?"

"May I die this instant, Senor Garcia, if I know," replied Perez.

"Why did you go to New Orleans?"

"To sell and to buy, Senor," replied Perez carelessly. He had no intention to say a word of the true cause of his late voyage. To admit that he had received letters ordering him to go upon the affairs of the mysterious Senora Raymundo, would call forth questions upon the contents of those letters, and those contents being told, it would be seen that he had obeyed from guilty fear.

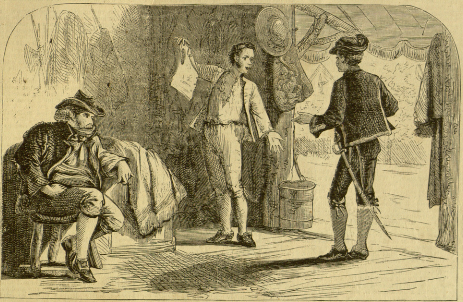
"You went of your own free will, Captain?"

"Certainly, Senor."

"You know no one of the name of Isadora Raymundo?"

"I do not, Senor; and is it not very plain that the name is a fictitious one?"

It was not known nor suspected by the officials of Cuba that Perez had made that voyage to New Orleans to sell Mercita. It was not even known to them that she had sailed in the *Doubloon*. Her very existence, under the name of Mercita, was unsuspected by the Spanish officials.



SCENE IN THE PAWNBROKER'S SHOP.

"It is of course to be believed," said the prison governor, "that the name Isadora Raymundo is a spurious one; but some one, and either a woman or a very handsome and effeminate looking young man, disguised in garb and voice as a woman, obtained the official signature of the Viceroy, whereby you are now in irons."

"And from these irons, Senor Garcia, I should in justice be instantly freed. I am an innocent man."

"Could we find this Isadora Raymundo, we might prove the charge true. She or he must know something of how Angelos Rio met his death."

"As to that, Senor, we know only that Rio disappeared from *The Doubloon* on the 10th of April, on the open sea, and that he must have fallen overboard unseen," said Perez boldly. "Men often fall overboard at sea, and drown even when the most eager exertions are made to save them. Since the order for my arrest is a forgery, I demand my instant release. Some enemy of mine—and I admit I may have more enemies than I am aware—has aimed to disgrace me, and, if possible, to have me executed as an assassin. That is all." And here Perez assumed a face full of contempt, and drew his shoulders up to his ears.

"But the body of Angelos Rio has been found," said the prison governor, with his cold and penetrating eyes fixed on the face of Perez.

"What of that? Dead bodies will float," replied Perez, sustaining the gaze with admirable carelessness.

"The crew of a vessel just arrived from San Domingo," continued the governor, "report that, some weeks ago, they saw the body of a man floating on the open sea. It was examined. It appeared to have been in the water three or four days. It was declared by one of the crew to be the body of Angelos Rio. The forehead was crushed in, as from a terrible blow of some blunt weapon. It had been stabbed through the heart with a dagger. The blade of the weapon had snapped off at the hilt, and was in the wound. This is the blade, Sancho Perez."

The Governor drew from a paper in which it was wrapped the long, slender blade of a dagger, and held it toward Perez.

With superb command of nerve, the slave dealer took the blade in his hand, gazed at it as if in profound examination, and then said:

"I think I recognize this blade, Senor Garcia."

"Ah—you do?"

"That is, if you, Senor, are sure beyond all doubt that the body in which it was found was that of Angelos Rio."

"The clothes on the body in which that blade was found," replied the Governor, "were preserved, and are in Havana. It is beyond all doubt that the garments were those worn by Angelos Rio on the 10th of April."

"So!" said Perez, nodding. "So—so! I recognize the dagger blade. It belonged to Lopez Soares."

"To Lopez Soares! To the sailor who gave the spurious order to the captain of the port at Cardenas?" asked the Governor.

"To Lopez Soares," replied Perez boldly, knowing, from what the turnkey had said, that Lopez Soares had fled, and had not been found.

"How know you that it was his, Captain?"

"Lopez Soares is a great boaster. He is always telling how many men he has fought and stabbed. He showed me this dagger on the 10th of April. He pointed out these three notches on this edge, and that on this edge, and told me they were made during an affray he had had in San Domingo, with some fishermen."

The prison governor was not aware that Perez had been told of the disappearance of Lopez Soares. He turned and left the cell suddenly, to increase the vigor of the search already afoot for Soares.

"You see," said Perez, to the turnkey. "The truth will come out. Lopez Soares killed Angelos Rio—probably at the instigation of this Senora Raymundo—eh? Then the deed is to be fastened on me. But do me a favor, Riaz."

"What, Captain?"

"See two or three of my crew, and repeat all that Senor Garcia said to me."

"I can easily see every one of your crew, Captain, as every man of them is in prison, except Lopez Soares."

"Oh! Since when?"

"Since those fellows from San Domingo arrived with that dagger blade and the clothes of Angelos Rio. Before that, your crew were held only as witnesses. Now it is thought some may have had part in the murder, and all are in irons."

Perez named several of his crew, and asked the turnkey to tell them what had passed between him and the governor of the prison. To this request he added the promise of a dozen doubloons.

The turnkey, quite open to such bribery, complied with the request; and at the formal trial, three of the crew, faithful to their captain, swore that the dagger blade had belonged to the missing Lopez Soares.

The murder of Angelos Rio, therefore, was not proved upon Perez; yet so much that was in violation of the laws of Spain came out during the trial, that after the murder was charged upon the absent Lopez Soares, Perez and most of his crew were sentenced to labor for life in the silver mines of Mexico.

During all the trial it did not appear who the mysterious Isadora Raymundo was. It was believed that she was some bitter enemy of Captain Perez, or a female agent of such an enemy, who had planned and carried out a scheme of vengeance against the slave dealer, without the detection of his or her agency therein.

It did transpire that a negress or mulattress was on board the *Doubloon* when Perez made his last voyage to New Orleans, and that he had sold her in that city. But this excited neither suspicion nor comment, as Perez was a slave dealer by profession, and it was not suspected that he had received Mercita on board and sold her by command of the unknown Senora Raymundo.

Fearing that were he to reveal the truth, the unknown Isadora Raymundo would be discovered by means of Mercita, and that in that case Isadora Raymundo might be a person able to prove that he, Sancho Perez, and not Lopez Soares, had murdered Angelos Rio, the slave dealer declared throughout the trial that he had never seen or even heard of any one by the name of Isadora Raymundo before it became known that a person under that name had deceived the Captain-General.

And the fact that the forgery had been committed was almost lost sight of as charges of piracy, robbery and other misdeeds accumulated against Perez ere it was decided that Angelos Rio had been assassinated by the missing sailor Lopez Soares.

The latter was condemned to be garroted, should he ever be captured; and this fact was some consolation to Sancho Perez when he heard his own terrible sentence.

"Come," he reflected in his cell, ere he was sent to those mines in which he was condemned to labor for life, "I have seen a score of men myself, and heard of hundreds, who either escaped from the Mexican mines, or were pardoned out; but the garrote! Ho! that makes a sure end of a man. I never saw a man alive after the garrote had throttled him. That will be the fate of Lopez Soares—my curse upon him!—if ever he is caught on Spanish land or sea. Were he to come forward now, he would be garroted before he were an hour older—or shot on the spot, if no garrote were at hand. But who ever knew those accursed garrotes to be scarce in Cuba? I am for the Mexican mines, eh? And for life—eh! Bosh! The next Captain-General—and they say a new viceroy is soon to be appointed—will signalize his inauguration by pardoning several convicts of the mines; and I have arranged matters so that the name of Sancho Perez shall not be without a friend to speak for it when pardons are to be given out. I may escape on the way to the mines. Certainly I shall escape before a year has passed."

It will be seen that Sancho Perez was very confident of not being long a prisoner, for though a convict and in irons, he was rich. The government had seized much of his property, but by no means all. Some of his crew had escaped the general conviction, and had privately assured him of their secret and certain aid.

His sentence, therefore, did not greatly terrify Sancho Perez; though its consequences infuriated him more than ever against his unknown foe, Isadora Raymundo.

"Millions of maledictions on her head!—for I am sure my enemy is a woman," he muttered, in the solitude of his dark cell. "Half of my wealth is reft from me! My slave mart—a splendid mart I had made of it, too! Two hundred slaves, male and female—choice ones, every one! All seized and confiscated by the government. My three schooners—the *Doubloon* among them! My two dwelling-houses, my five stores, my horses, my everything that those rascally officials could lay their hands upon! And all because of somebody I do not know—this Isadora Raymundo. Millions of maledictions on her head! There is some profound mystery in the affair which the government does not even suspect. There must be! It is said and believed that Isadora Raymundo is some bitter enemy of mine, that has simply wreaked a terrible vengeance upon me. I do not believe that. Not I. The mystery, the plot, whatever it may be, concerns that negress Mercita whom I sold to Madame Varlville. Sancho Perez was simply to be, and he is—diablos!—the cat's-paw to take the nuts from the fire for Isadora Raymundo! It was the intent of that accursed one that Sancho Perez should be garroted, strangled, put to death—not because Sancho Perez was hated by Senora Raymundo, but that something should be forever hidden. But then this Senora Raymundo must have had the aid of the devil to have even suspected that I had stabbed Angelos Rio! In other words, the devil, whom I served in slaying Angelos Rio, must have betrayed me to Senora Raymundo. But wait until I am free again!" muttered Perez ferociously, and brandishing his fists in the air. "I know where to find Mercita! She shall squeak! She shall tell me who this Senora Raymundo is!"

He was interrupted in such meditations of future vengeance by the entrance of the turnkey Riaz.

"Ha!" exclaimed Perez, rising as Riaz came into the cell. "I suppose you come to tell me that I am to begin immediately my voyage to Mexico—to those silver mines? Well, who can resist fate? Some day, however, you shall dine with me, and I will tell you over a famous feast, how they dig silver in those mines."

"I am glad to see you so cheerful, Captain," replied the turnkey gravely.

"Oh, it is a trifle!" cried Perez, snapping his fingers. "I shall not be there long. Not even a year. I shall be pardoned, or I shall escape, my friend. I am not yet a beggar. Gold will be my rescuer."

"It is true, Captain, that the officials of the Mexican mines are easily bribed. They often permit a rich convict to escape."

"I know that. Ha! ha! Or they do even better, friend Riaz," said Perez, laughing. "They unite in a petition or a recommendation for the pardon of a rich convict, and the Governor of the mines signs it—for a consideration; and in the end, after a few days, the convict is set free—recovers nearly all his confiscated property, and gives half of what he recovers to the Captain-General of Cuba, or of Mexico. Gold is a powerful and a faithful friend—ho! ho!" And here Perez rubbed his manacled hands briskly together.

"But it is not so in Spain, Captain, where the king must sign the convict's pardon."

"No; but this is Cuba, or Mexico."

"And if the sentence had been that you should labor for life in the quicksilver mines at Almeida, in Spain, Captain?"

The slave dealer shuddered; then roared out a furious oath at Riaz for the bare mention of the quicksilver mines of Almeida.

"Diablos!" said Perez. "I think a man would be better off in being garroted—in being dead—than being a life convict in the quicksilver mines of Almeida. A man inhales poison in those mines at every breath. He breathes the fumes of mercury! Eating ulcers, that bleed and fester, fasten upon his flesh! Ugh! eruptions, malignant sores! His hair, his beard falls out; his teeth fall out; his jaws rot; his bones crumble; he bloats here and shrivels there; his skin turns green, blue, livid, black; it has every hue in horrible streaks! Ugh! Speak not to me of the quicksilver mines of Almeida!"

"But I must, Captain."

"Must!"

"Yes, since your sentence has been changed, and you are to embark within an hour for Spain, where you are to labor for life in the quicksilver mines of Almeida."

"You mock me, dog of a turnkey!" gasped the appalled slave dealer and pirate, glaring at Riaz.

"No, Captain. Here is the final sentence, written out by the Secretary of the Captain-General for your reading," replied the turnkey, giving the prisoner a paper.

Perez read, groaned in sudden despair, and fell upon the floor, where for a time he raved like a madman.

He was sent to the quicksilver mines of Almeida, and years were to pass ere he should meet Mercita again.

But it was fated that he should meet her again, somewhere in this story.

It is necessary to state here, that the same ship that carried Sancho Perez to Spain, carried also a letter to some one in Madrid, in which were these words:

"The St. Andrew's Cross is in Havana, or was recently. The bank-note for twelve thousand reals, No. 13,721, mentioned among others in your last, has been traced to Sancho Perez, a convict for life to the quicksilver mines of Almeida; and he sails to-day in irons, on the ship *De Gama*. He has been questioned, but denies that he ever had that bank-note, though the Jewish money-broker Samuels swears he saw it in the hands of Perez. Moreover, Samuels asserts that a Spanish naval officer, apparently quite a young man, though with the greater part of his face concealed, called at his counter on the 16th of April and showed to him the bank-note No. 13,721, took up a pen and drew on the upper right-hand corner of the note a St. Andrew's cross, and said to Samuels, 'Tell Sancho Perez, if he calls with this note, that I told you he would. Then he will be aware that I am in earnest.' Samuels wrote the words down, and on the same day showed them to Sancho Perez, when he came with the note to see if it was genuine. The Jew did not know at the time that a search to trace the person who got that note at the Royal Bank in Madrid, on the third of last December, was being made. Sancho Perez was about to exchange the note for its value in gold, but suddenly changed his mind and kept the note. He denies all recollection of having seen Samuels, or the note; yet we must believe he lies. The day after he saw Samuels he sailed for New Orleans. He purchased many articles of merchandise while he was there, and sold a negress to a Madame Ruth Varlville—which I mention only that you may see how minute have been our inquiries—but he did not pay away that note. And if he had, the fact would be of no use to us in the search we have in hand, as we desire to trace back and not forward. We must conclude that the unknown Spanish naval officer gave that note to Sancho Perez, though Perez swears he received no note of any kind from any Spanish or other naval officer on the 16th of April, nor at any time. As the convict is obdurate in his denial, and at present out of our power to be forced into a confession, we are using every means to find the unknown Spanish officer who held the note before Perez. We suspect that that supposed naval officer is the same person who, under the name of Senora Isadora Raymundo, obtained an official signature from the Captain-General which was afterward used against Sancho Perez—of whose arrest, trial and conviction please find inclosed full particulars. We also suspect—though this we keep strictly secret—that 'Senora Isadora Raymundo' is the very person we are so anxious to secure—that is, *the living St. Andrew's Cross.* I am very sure that you will come in person to Havana, very soon after your perusal of this; but I would presume to advise that an attempt be made in Spain to learn something of the person from whom he received the note No. 13,721. Meanwhile, here we will continue our efforts to find the so-called Senora Isadora Raymundo, who, if not the *living St. Andrew's Cross*, must have been an agent of the latter. We have no reason for supposing that Sancho Perez knew, or was known to 'Senora Isadora Raymundo,' except in the remarkable fact that the official signature of the Captain-General, on which Sancho Perez was arrested, was traced to that unknown person. If Sancho Perez served her, why did she plot and nearly accomplish his death? And again, if he knows who she is—whether man or woman—why does he not reveal something that may avenge him? And again, if 'Senora Isadora Raymundo' is simply a bitter enemy to Sancho Perez—as all here believe—and not a person exceedingly desirous to remain unknown, why does he or she not come forward? For the Captain-General, well pleased at the result of the arrest of Sancho Perez—which has rid Cuba of a great rascal and his villainous crew—has proclaimed a reward of 10,000 reals and full pardon to 'Senora Isadora Raymundo,' for the use that person made of the official signature. But the 'Senora' has so far continued unknown."

The perusal of the above will convince the reader that the writer was wholly unsuspicious of the fact that Sancho Perez had received Mercita on his vessel, and sold her to Madame Ruth Varlville, by command of the mysterious Senora Raymundo. In the mind of that writer, the fact that Perez had sold a negress named Mercita to some one in New Orleans amounted to nothing, as Perez was by calling a slave dealer, and the writer mentioned it incidentally, as he said.

Perez, fearing to say anything that might reveal the identity of the unknown, who he was sure was able to prove that he, and not Lopez Soares, had murdered Angelos Rio, denied everything.

No one asked him aught of Mercita in connection with the mystery, for no one suspected the truth, so far as she was concerned, and the vindictive slave dealer, hopeful again of escape at some time from his terrible sentence, held his secret in his breast.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SENOR AND THE PAWNBROKER.

"I shall live only to try to escape," resolved Perez, as the ship *De Gama* bore him over the seas, "and I shall escape only to be avenged; and I can be avenged by my own hands only through Mercita. She alone can discover this thrice accursed and infernally cunning Isadora Raymundo to me. If I reveal all I know, and as Senora Raymundo does not come forward for the reward and pardon of the Captain-General, these others who seem so eager to learn something—the devil knows what!—will go after that negress, and learn from her perhaps, that which is a mystery to me—and that is, who is Senora Raymundo? who is Mercita? why did Senora Raymundo make me sell Mercita, and to Madame Varlville if possible? And why did the Senora—a million of maledictions upon her!—suspect that I had killed Angelos Rio? and—diablos!—why did she, after paying me twelve thousand reals, and after I had obeyed her to the very letter, have me arrested? And how was it that Lopez Soares had that spurious but fatal order of arrest ready for my ruin at Cardenas? and—and—blazes devour my luck!—many other things?"

The bank-note for twelve thousand reals, No. 13,721, he had with him, cunningly concealed.

The Lord's Prayer, written in four languages by Mercita, and signed Mercita, he had lost; but he had not changed a certain suspicion which had filled his brain like an electric shock at the moment he gazed at the delicate lines immediately after finding that paper in his pocket—the suspicion that Mercita had been the amanuensis of Senora Raymundo.

Had he concealed that paper as carefully as he had the note No. 13,721, he would not have lost it. The note he had placed in a leathern belt, which he wore around his waist and next to his skin. The paper, when he sought for it to put it in the belt with the note, he could not find. It had slipped through a hole in the pocket of his vest, and worked its way into unsuspected concealment in the lining, or rather between the stuff of which the vest was made, fawn-skin, and its lining. The vest was of a material which would not wear out for years: it was fawn-skin, tanned with the hair retained, and made a very gay garment of sleek, shiny and spotted exterior.

Sancho Perez supposed he had lost the paper; yet, so long as he retained the vest, it would have been with him, and he might have found it. But he was not to retain the vest, for just before he was taken from his cell, he was stripped of all his usual attire except his shirt, and clad in a coarse dress given only to convicts doomed to hard labor for life.

His own garments were then given to the turnkey, and the turnkey sold them to a pawnbroker. The fawn-skin vest of course went to the same purchaser, as it was too large for the turnkey—who also never wore a vest.

The vest remained on the hands of the pawnbroker as a very unsalable article for many years.

But one day, and to be exact, a few months before Madame Varlville was prostrated by that sudden illness of which the first chapter of this story speaks, that is, twelve years after Sancho Perez sailed from Havana as a convict, in the *De Gama*, a man strolled into the shop of the pawnbroker, and made several purchases.

The garb of this man was mean and shabby, and altogether he seemed to be a very ordinary person. His purchases were very poor also, but sufficient to persuade the pawnbroker to attempt to sell him an article that had been an eyesore to him for years.

"Perhaps I may sell this squalid fellow the fawn-skin vest," thought the pawnbroker. "He is evidently a stranger in Havana, and seems to have a taste for what no one else is in a hurry to buy."

With this thought he took down the vest from a peg, where it had hung until nearly all the hair had fallen off, from the ravages of the moths.

"I have here a vest, my friend, which may please your fancy, and you may have it at a very low price. I will not deny that it is very old, yet it is still serviceable—"

"Here, shopkeeper, attend to me, as I am in a hurry," exclaimed a second customer, who at that moment entered the shop. "I have taken a fancy to something in your show-window."

"To what, Senor?" asked the pawnbroker, casting the old vest toward the shabby customer, and hastening to serve the second, whose garb was new, costly, and that of a person well to do.

"To that extraordinary looking cane, in the shape of a serpent, and with a human skull carved out of the wood for a head."

"Good!" thought the pawnbroker. "Here is a chance to sell another very unsalable article. Yes, Senor; a very queer cane, is it not?"

"Very. Who made it?" asked the Senor, who was a man of middle age, erect and vigorous frame, dark featured, and full bearded.

"A native African. A Voodoo doctor. He

used to belong to Sancho Perez. You may have heard of Sancho Perez, Senor, once a famous slave dealer of Havana?"

The shabby looking man, seated on a stool in the rear of the dingy old shop, and till this moment staring moodily at the old vest, as it lay on the counter before him, started on hearing the name of Sancho Perez, muttered "Diablos!" and by an unnoticed movement drew his tattered old hat further down upon his bandaged visage.

"Sancho Perez? No, I have never heard of Sancho Perez," replied the Senor. "Who was he?"

"Old friend of mine, at one time, Senor—that is, while I did not know what a grand villain he was—a pirate and a murderer," said the pawnbroker, whose name was Gomaza. "I have heard that he is dead."

"Diablos!" again muttered the shabby man. "Why do they speak of Sancho Perez now?"

"Sancho Perez once owned the African who carved that cane, Senor," continued Gomaza. "Perez was sentenced for life, years ago, to the quicksilver mines of Almeida, Spain. The African who carved the cane was sold by the government, which had confiscated all of Perez's property. I bought him. He was what the blacks call a Voodoo doctor, that is—"

"Oh, I know very well what a Voodoo doctor is; and now I remember that I have heard of Captain Sancho Perez. He has escaped from the mines of Almeida," said the Senor.

"Ah! he is a lucky fellow," exclaimed Gomaza huskily, and suddenly pale.

"A lucky fellow! Sancho Perez a lucky fellow! Diablos!" muttered the shabby man. "Who is this stranger, who is the first to tell in Havana that Sancho Perez has escaped from the accursed mines of Almeida? A million of maledictions on his head."

The shabby man would have ground his teeth with rage, but he had very few teeth left—only four; the lower and the upper canines.

Gomaza had not yet seen more than a very little of the shabby man's face, as a dingy black cravat was tied in a huge bow over his cheeks, jaws and nose.

Shabby looking customers were so often his purchasers that the pawnbroker seldom bestowed more attention upon them than was necessary to make a sale, or to trade for a paltry pawn.

The unknown Senor was of a class that rarely honored the deep and dark and narrow shop of Ruy Gomaza, and the latter, eager to sell the cane, continued, with affected carelessness:

"Sancho Perez was very lucky to escape. They do not often escape from those mines, unless to the grave—and then there is very little left of them to bury—ha! ha! only a little—just enough to die. Perez will be caught."

"A million maledictions on the dog that laughs!" muttered the shabby man, and his right hand convulsively grasped the hilt of his hidden dagger.

"But as I was saying, Senor," continued Ruy Gomaza, wholly unconscious of the wrath of the shabby man, "I bought the African Voodoo doctor that made that cane. He had quite a collection of charms, and odds and ends—the gods know where he got so many queer nothings!—with which he used to practice his quackery and jugglery as a Voodoo doctor. I have them all in an old chest, for he is dead. He died about ten years ago, and that cane of his was the only thing of his that I thought salable."

"And salable only as a curiosity, shopman," said the Senor, as he examined the cane.

"Or to some Voodoo doctor, Senor," replied Gomaza, with a laugh. "I admit that it is not very valuable, except to a collector of curiosities. This Senor," added he to himself, "is perhaps a collector of curiosities."

"Ha!" suddenly exclaimed the Senor, whose close scrutiny of the polished surface of the cane just then detected a name scratched upon it. "Here is a name."

"Yes, Senor. A name that has remained a mystery for years," said Gomaza, who was quite a gossip. "The name—your honor fails to decipher it?"

"Hum! I think it is Isadora Raymundo," replied the Senor carelessly.

The shabby man started violently this time. But for the clatter of a passing cart of a yelling fruit dealer, his mutter of almost uncontrollable rage might have been heard, and the words:

"A million of demons seize and rend Isadora Raymundo! Will this accursed stranger never depart, so that I may venture to say something to Ruy Gomaza?"

"That is the name, noble Senor," continued Gomaza. "Has your honor never heard of the mystery attached to that name?"

"Never, shopman. Tell me the story. I think I may purchase the cane, since there is a mysterious name on it."

"Thanks, noble Senor," said Gomaza, always ready to tell a story, true or false. "Pray be seated. I say, my friend"—this to the shabby man, who had now turned the back of his tattered coat toward the front of the shop. "As my conversation may be long—it is quite a story, noble sir"—this to the Senor, whose eyes were cast down, as if in deep thought—"you had better say what you will give me for the vest"—this to the shabby man; and then again, with a bow, to the Senor—"That very vest, sir, may be said to be connected with the story which I am about to have the honor to relate to your worship, as that buckskin, or rather, to speak to the hair, that fawn-skin vest used to belong to Captain Sancho Perez."

"Diablos!" muttered the shabby man, with a start on his stool as if a needle had been suddenly thrust to the eye into his flesh, and flashing a glance at the old vest, which he had scarcely noticed before. "It is a long time since you were buttoned over the breast of 'lucky' Sancho Perez."

And then aloud, but with his back toward the front of the shop:

"I will buy the old vest, shopkeeper—if a real will pay for it."

"A real!" exclaimed the pawnbroker, in affected scorn of so low an offer, though a thousand times he had been tempted to sell the moth-eaten old garment for a maravedi. "Come to think of it, it may be called a curiosity"—this to tempt an offer from the Senor, who said instantly:

"I will look at it."

"Oh, it is plain," thought Gomaza, "that the Senor is, as I suspected, a collector of curiosities. Now what shall I say is curious about the vest? I must invent a story about it. I may say that it was worn by Sancho Perez in a duel, or a fight, or something of that kind. Anything sometimes is believed by curiosity hunters."

Musing thus as he hurried toward the shabby man, the pawnbroker soon had his grasp upon the old vest.

But the shabby man had his hard and bony hand upon the garment also, and said, in a harsh tone:

"I want it. I will give you two reals for it; it is not worth one."

"Then why do you offer two, my man?" said Gomaza, as with a sudden jerk he secured the vest. "But if the Senor does not want it you shall have it, my friend."

"Aye, the rich are always the choice," muttered the shabby man, scowling under his hat and glancing wrathfully toward the Senor. "That man was on the ship—I remember his profile now. That does not matter. He was simply a passenger. I would like to put that old vest on, just to see if it would fit me as it used to fit the 'lucky' Sancho Perez! Diablos! Lucky indeed! A million maledictions on such luck!"

"I see nothing curious about this garment," said the Senor, who was now examining the vest with gloved hands, "except as a trophy of the power of the moths."

"But, noble Senor," the pawnbroker hastened to say, "there is a remarkable story, a very remarkable story, I may say, connected with that vest and Sancho Perez. I have heard that the fawn, from whose skin it was made, was once the pet of Christopher Columbus."

Ruy Gomaza invented this superb lie on the spur of the moment.

"What a liar!" muttered the shabby man. "I see. He believes the Senor is a purchaser of curiosities. The skin of the pet fawn of Christopher Columbus! I wish I dared to laugh aloud. Ho! ho!"

"Yes, Senor," continued Gomaza firmly; "it is undoubtedly true, though I first heard the story from Sancho Perez himself."

"Diablos!" muttered the shabby man. "He is magnificent in his lies!"

"Sancho Perez won it at a raffle in San Domingo, put up by a celebrated antiquarian of that island—"

"Perhaps this may be a letter written by that same great discoverer," said the Senor, with a sarcastic smile, which told that he was not a simpleton, and showing a folded and crumpled paper which his fingers had found in the moth-eaten vest. "Now what has preserved this paper from the moths? Ah, tobacco—snuff."

"Yes, undoubtedly, Senor, as Sancho Perez was a famous snufftaker, and carried it loose in his vest pockets. But what is the paper, Senor?—and, I beg your worship's pardon, as I have not yet sold the vest, excuse me, the paper belongs to me."

The Senor had not yet unfolded the paper, which was folded very small, and was yellow and discolored with the powdered tobacco which had alone preserved it from insect ravages.

"Wait," said the Senor, in a tone more haughty than he had used since he had first sharply demanded the pawnbroker's attention. "That was, you assert, once the vest of Sancho Perez?"

"Undoubtedly, Senor."

"When last worn by him, shopman?"

"Diablos! why does he ask that?" thought the shabby man. "What paper is that which he has found in the vest?"

"It was taken from Sancho Perez," replied Gomanza to the Senor, "by the turnkey Riaz—who sold it to me—in the cell of the condemned, when the latter was about to be garbed in convict dress."

"No one has worn it since it was worn by Sancho Perez?"

"That I can swear to, as I bargained with Riaz at the door of the cell for the clothes of the prisoner, and that vest has been unsalably for sale in this shop ever since, Senor. So that paper, pardon me, which may inclose a bank-note—"

"What bank-note?"

"Any. I do not know that it does; but, excuse me, Senor, it may—for I have more than once found a bank-note in second-hand garments—"

"That may be, shopman; and I cannot deny that whatever the paper may be or contain, the vest and all it contains or contained is yours. But let us make a wager."

"A wager, noble Senor!"

"Yes; if it contains any bank-note not of a certain number, I will pay you the value of the note and ten doubloons. But if it contains that certain note, the note shall be mine."

"It may contain nothing, Senor."

"Very probable, shopman, but in that case neither of us will lose anything; and as I have said, the paper is yours. Come; I am not only a hunter of curiosities—such as vests made out of the skins of the pet fawns of Christopher Columbus, who never had a pet fawn—and a purchaser of canes of diabolical make, fashioned by African Voodoo doctors, but I am also very fond of laying curious wagers. In that respect I am equal to the English, who make bets upon which of two lumps of sugar a certain fly will light. Come; ten doubloons and the value in gold of any bank-note that this soiled paper may contain, if that note be not of a certain number to be named by me, to be yours; and that note, if there be one of that number, to be mine."

"A strange wager, noble Senor," said the puzzled pawnbroker, scratching his head.

"Diablos! very strange!" thought the shabby man.

"But name the number of the note, noble Senor," said Gomaza. "I may accept the wager. I am fond of curious wagers myself. Come to reflect," he added to himself, "the chances are all on my side, and the Senor is only amusing himself."

"The number of the note to make me winner," said the Senor, "must be 13,721."

"No. 13,721," repeated Gomaza, writing the number.

"No. 13,721! Diablos!" muttered the shabby man, starting violently, and darting a glance of inquiring amazement over his shoulder at the Senor. "There is something in this!"

"And the value of the note, noble Senor?" asked the pawnbroker.

"Must be twelve thousand reals," was the reply.

"Ah!" said the shabby man, almost aloud, and with a glare of terror in his eyes as he gazed at the Senor.

But neither the Senor nor Gomaza observed the flaming interest with which the shabby man stared and listened. They were not looking toward him.

"What is that paper?" thought the shabby man. "Why does this Senor make such a wager? Why does he speak of a bank-note which is in the secret pocket of my belt? Maledictions on him! I fear he has spoilt my affair with Ruy Gomaza! I came here to get Ruy Gomaza to give me gold for the note No. 13,721, and this Senor speaks of the same!"

"The wager is not fair, noble Senor," said the pawnbroker.

"Why not, shopman?"

"Because already the paper and all it may contain are my property, Senor. If the paper does contain a bank-note for twelve thousand reals, numbered 13,721, you will win that amount. If it does not contain that note I will gain nothing in winning the bet, as by the conditions of the affair all else is already mine. Make a stake on your part, noble Senor."

"Ruy Gomaza is not a fool," thought the shabby man.

"Well, shopman, if the paper does not contain that note, No. 13,721, I will pay you a thousand reals," said the Senor. "Now the chances are all in your favor."

"Yes, if the noble Senor does not know that the note No. 13,721 is in that paper."

"I do not know it. I will be frank with you. I only suspect that it is."

"The Senor is not then betting on a certainty?" asked Gomaza hesitatingly. Sharp Gomaza! he knew very well that the paper contained nothing. The presence of that paper had not escaped that search which his avaricious fingers always made of every second-hand garment he purchased. The vest had not been his ten minutes after he purchased it from the turnkey Riaz years before, ere he had found that paper, ascertained that it was valueless to him, folded it as he had found it, and thrust it back where he had found it "for good luck," as he had muttered at the time. It was one of his superstitions that if anything found in any second-hand garments he purchased was of no value nor use, it would bring bad luck upon him were he to destroy it or throw it away.

The effect of this superstition upon the lives of certain persons in the Varlville mansion will be seen to have been most momentous.

"I am betting upon a suspicion, shopman," replied the Senor haughtily. "How could I in this matter bet upon a certainty? Rascal, would you insult me? Even by gamblers it is considered dishonorable to bet upon a certainty. I have never been in Havana before yesterday. I have never been in your shop before this very hour. The vest has been under your eyes for years. A certainty, indeed!"

"Still," thought the unnoticed shabby man, gazing covertly but keenly at the Senor, and with a kind of mingled terror and delight in his heart, "I am very sure that this haughty Senor, who may be a grandee, or at least a hidalgo, is perfectly confident that he is betting on a certainty. Diablos! who is he? What does he know about note No. 13,721? Why does he wish to lay such a wager? He will lose, for I know Ruy Gomaza well enough to know that he knows what that paper contains. The paper is valueless, or it would not have been found by the Senor."

"Pardon me, Senor," said the pawnbroker humbly. "The boldness of the Senor startled me."

"Then you will agree to the wager, shopman?"

"Make the stake on your part, noble Senor, two thousand reals. If you win I will really lose twelve thousand reals; if I win, you will lose but two thousand."

"Agreed, shopman; and I will add, that if there is not a Saint Andrew's cross in ink, on the upper right-hand corner of the note No. 13,721, you shall have it."

"Diablos!" exclaimed the shabby man, starting even to his feet.

"What did you say?" said the Senor and Gomaza, turning toward the shabby man.

"I said nothing. I coughed," he replied, and coughed violently.

"You startled me," said Gomaza, who had suddenly turned very pale. "The devil take you and your cough! I thought," he added to himself, and shuddering as if chilled to the marrow, "I heard the voice of a dead man—for Sancho Perez must certainly be dead, even if he did escape from the mines alive. I say, my ragged friend, suppose you go. Your cough has a very unpleasant effect upon my nerves."

The shabby man ceased to cough, but he did not take the hint to depart. He sat upon the stool again, and leaned his arms and head upon the edge of the counter. Through a ragged rent in the lappel of his tattered coat he darted his keen and ambushed glances at the Senor, and listened eagerly to every word.

"Here are two notes, for a thousand reals each," said the Senor. "Take them, shopman. If this paper contains a bank-note for twelve thousand reals, of the number 13,721, with a St. Andrew's cross in ink on the upper right-hand corner of the note, the note is mine. If not, the contents of the paper are yours, and those two notes also."

"Agreed, noble Senor," replied Gomaza, who added, in his sleeve, "He is a fool or a madman, or he has no doubt that the note he speaks of is there."

"He is not a fool, nor is he a madman," thought the shabby man, whose covert gaze was fixed eagerly on the Senor. "He is sure that the note, No. 13,721, for twelve thousand reals, is in that paper, and that he is about to win ten thousand reals! But, diablos! what right has he to imagine that a paper taken from an old vest that once belonged to Sancho Perez could possibly contain a bank-note for twelve thousand reals; and especially No. 13,721, with a St. Andrew's cross in ink on the right-hand upper corner?"

"Is all understood, shopman?"

"Perfectly, noble Senor," replied the pawnbroker, with a grin in his sleeve.

"Then I will win ten thousand reals," said the Senor confidently; and as he spoke, he unfolded the paper.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NELLIE'S VICTORY.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

"You think George has ceased to love you, Nellie?"

"I don't exactly mean that, Aunt Mary. But certainly George has changed. There was a time when he never left home in the evening; now he never stays at home an hour after dinner."

"It is a grave charge for so young a wife to make!"

"I wish it was only the foolish fancy you seem to imagine, Aunt Mary."

"I do not think it is altogether fancy, Nellie. But I want to get at the whole truth of the matter, and to see if we cannot find out the cause of this change. Surely George is not unkind to you."

"He is always finding fault, Aunt Mary!"

"With what, Nellie?"

"Oh, all sorts of things: the house, the baby, my dress."

"With no ground for complaint?"

The little wife blushed deeply, and made no answer. Mrs. Carr, her soft eyes bent lovingly upon her niece, said very gently:

"Where does George go in the evenings, Nellie?"

"He is at his sister Kate's a great deal, and—and—Kate says he is very fond of hearing Mrs. Gordon sing."

"Mrs. Gordon! Do I know her?"

"She was Retta Wilbur, and is now a widow. Her brother is Kate's husband."

"Yes, yes. But, Nellie, you play and sing far better than Retta Wilbur."

"Not now, Aunt Mary. I never practice now."

"But George is so very fond of music. I am sure you cannot neglect yours, if you try to make home the most attractive place in the world for your husband."

Again that deep, burning blush.

"I don't think the piano has been opened for a year, Aunt Mary."

"Nellie!"

"So few married ladies keep up their music."

"But many are obliged to give up accomplishments to attend to the details of household duty. This is not your excuse, Nellie. Your husband's means allow you a good, competent girl, and Maggie is a jewel of a nurse. Do you really find your whole time taken up?"

"No. I could practice, but—but— Well, I scarcely know how I got out of the habit."

"Nellie, will you allow me to tell you a few plain, home truths without giving you offence?"

"Aunt Mary! Do you think you could offend me? Have you not stood in the place of confessor to me ever since I was a wee totling child? Say what you will."

"How long have you been married, Nellie?"

"Three years."

"And you think in that short time you have lost your husband's affection, at least in a measure. I do not think so, but I will tell you where I think the trouble lies. George, as you well know, was brought up and educated in a home where refined and elegant ladies presided over every detail. I think, dear, when he met you, he saw the same refinements, the same taste and gentle manners, that make his sisters so much beloved in society, and such charming inmates of the home circle."

"Thanks to you, who filled a mother's place to me."

"I was very glad when George told me of his love for you, darling. I believed him to be an honorable, true man, one whose wealth was the least attraction to my Nellie."

"You were right. He was, he is all you thought him."

"He married you, believing he would carry to his future home one who would make it not merely a place to eat and sleep in, but a home of taste and refined pleasure. He made the mere house a gem, as I know; he brought into it a lady, and when I sailed for Europe there was in no circle of society a more charming drawing-room than Mrs. George Huntley's, nor a more devoted husband than the one whose name that lady bore. I return, and you tell me all is changed. Nellie, is the fault all on your husband's side? Have you made his home what he hoped it would be?"

"No," said Nellie, in a low tone.

"When you come to see me again, dear, tell me you have won your husband back again. Retta Wilbur was the rival of your girlhood, but she must not mar your married happiness. Let your husband see that the charms that won him can still hold his heart fast."

Very slowly Helen Huntley wended her way homeward through the hot, dusty streets. She was pondering over her aunt's words, the aunt whose love for her she knew was only second to a mother's. Too truly had she said that her husband had not found his hopes of a home fulfilled. As Helen reviewed the past year by the light of her newly roused conscience, she marvelled at the many instances of patient forbearance she recalled, and owned in her heart that the fault-finding of which she had complained was very gentle, and very often omitted where grave cause existed for it. It was hard to define exactly the day and hour when the household arrangements began to fall entirely into the hands of a servant, whose perfect neatness and competency were, it must be admitted, a strong temptation to a young mistress. It was difficult to say when Helen first found it too much trouble to dress for dinner unless company was expected, when the drawing-room was closed except for weekly cleaning, when the fine-toned piano was first doomed to silence and solitude.

As the young wife entered her own room after her long walk, fevered with the heat of the day and her own train of thought, the little clock upon the mantel warned her that she had only two hours' time before her husband would be at home to dinner. It required an exercise of all her newly roused resolutions to refrain from throwing herself upon the bed to rest; and surely her long walk was a good and sufficient excuse for this indulgence.

The large airy room, cool and dusky, was very inviting, but Helen thrust aside the temptation. Hastily divesting herself of her walking dress, she put on a loose wrapper, and hurried to the drawing-room.

Half an hour there altered materially the aspect of affairs, for Helen wanted neither neatness nor taste, when she chose to exert them.

A visit to the nursery and two-year-old Georgie; and then, returning to her room, the little woman proceeded to make her own toilet, recalling her husband's favorite colors, and exerting her own taste. A crisp, cool white muslin, ruffled and trimmed as fashion dictated, with knots of blue ribbon at throat and belt, and confining the luxuriant waving brown hair, transformed the pretty face and figure, and brightened Helen into a most attractive hostess.

Only ten minutes left for the dining-room. Jane was sure to have a well-cooked dinner and a neatly arranged table, but a few touches here and there removed all the stiff primness of Jane's work, while a tall vase of June roses made the dining-room fragrant and pleasant.

When George Huntley opened his hall door with his usual weary sigh, his foot had scarcely passed the threshold when a pleasant sense of rest and relief crept over him. The long closed doors of the drawing-room stood wide open. The half-closed blinds of the open windows admitted the cool evening breezes, softly stirring the lace curtains; vases and saucers of fresh, fragrant flowers stood here and there, and upon the open piano were scattered loose sheets of music.

In this pleasant room a chubby boy in white was running to meet papa, while a smiling wife spoke a few gentle words of welcome. No fretful woman with untidy dress and rough hair, no boy banished to the nursery to-night.

George was a philosopher. He made no comment, but Nellie felt the added tenderness of his kiss, noted the admiring looks in his eyes, and felt that her work was appreciated.

Dinner passed off pleasantly. Encouraged by her success so far, Nellie chatted gayly, and George found himself lingering over the dessert of fresh fruits till long after his usual time for leaving the table.

"You are not going out?" Nellie said, as she saw George advancing ominously toward the hat rack.

"I was going to Kate's. Will you not come along?"

"I would rather have you here."

"Then I will stay. You have the first claim, Madame," and he bowed with graceful, though laughing, formality.

"Thanks! I was thinking how long it was since we had a game of backgammon."

"I hoped you were going to play for me," with a glance at the piano.

"I will. To-night you must remember that I am out of practice, but afterward I will not claim that indulgence. To-morrow I will resume daily practice."

"I wish you would," was the earnest reply. "It has really grieved me to see such musical talent and culture as yours being wasted."

It was a cause for regret. Even in that opening prelude the skillful fingers regained some of their cunning and force, and when at last Nellie said she was tired, both were amazed to find two hours had flown by.

A few games of backgammon, a song or two, and it was time to retire.

Instead of a lonely, hurried breakfast the next morning, George found Nellie, in a neat morning dress, presiding over the table, as in the days when housekeeping had the charm of novelty.

Three weeks passed away, and then Kate came to spend an evening with her brother, accompanied by the pretty widow, Mrs. Gordon.

Nellie had scarcely admitted to herself why she chose her softest and prettiest muslin for that evening's wear; why she was so very careful in the arrangement of the Pompadour roll her husband declared so becoming to her face; why she selected her prettiest set of jewelry, and crisp new ribbons for hair and necktie. But George, as his visitors entered the room, could not refrain from the comparison between Nellie and Retta, and a throb of exultation at the thought that he had chosen well.

Pique, or a more ignoble impulse, prompted the dashing widow to exert all her fascinations. She played brilliantly; she sang well; she chatted with wit and vivacity; but Nellie met her bravely upon her own ground, and conquered her. Her musical attainments far surpassed the widow's showy, superficial playing, and her voice was full of depth and feeling. Not once did she waver. Her husband's heart was the stake for which she played, and though she knew it had never strayed far from its lawful allegiance, she wanted it firmly fixed upon herself.

The evening was nearly over, when Kate said:

"You have quite deserted us, George. It is three weeks since you have spent an evening at our house."

"Impossible! It cannot be so long."

Nellie turned her head away to hide her glad smile of triumph.

"But it is," Kate persisted; "we were counting the days this morning."

"I will come with Nellie some evening next week. Where has the time flown, Nell?"

"There were two evenings at the theatre," Nellie said demurely.

"Yes, and we have been learning some new duets. And I am reading Owen Meredith's last new poem aloud to Nellie, and we are contriving some additions for the conservatory, that take time to calculate and plan. Then Nellie is helping me about some papers that I want to get in order, and—"

"Stop! stop! You are pardoned!" Kate cried, laughing at her brother's earnest face. "Only, when these pursuits will allow you to spare one evening, pray remember that you have a sister. Nell, Walter was saying last week he wanted to hear you sing that Brindisi he used to admire so much. I am so glad you have taken up your music again. We were all so proud of it."

"I mean to keep my practice up now," Nellie said. "Georgie is getting so big that mamma cannot make him an excuse for laziness any longer."

So, with promises for an evening at Kate's soon, the party separated, George escorting the ladies home.

Nellie sat thoughtfully in the deserted parlor, wondering if her husband would soon return, or be detained by Mrs. Gordon's charms till a still later hour.

The full time to be allowed for the walk had passed, and a doubt was creeping into the wife's heart, when a ringing step upon the pavement, light bounding feet upon the stoop, and the rattling of the latch-key in the lock, announced her husband's return.

"Waiting for me, dear?" he said.

"You have come home quickly," she answered.

For answer, he took her into his arms, and while he looked longingly into her eyes, he sang in a low, sweet voice:

"There 's no place like home."

So Nellie won her victory, and she kept the advantage gained.

IN THE TWILIGHT.

BY R. W. EASTERBROOKS.

Two golden heads bent low over a golden satin that fairly revelled in the luxuriousness of color which the last red rays of the afternoon sun showered down upon it. Two noble hearts wearing themselves out in a struggle against heartlessness.

"Sister," and one golden head lifted itself wearily, "do you think she will pay us to-night?"

"She *must*," replied the other resolutely. "I shall not hesitate to tell her our urgent need, if she proposes to defer payment."

"She will look gloriously beautiful;" and Mena Hathaway's violet eyes turned away from the shimmering yellow, and looked a moment out into the eastern gray, where one little star twinkled merrily, in provoking indifference to the heavy hearts far down below.

"I declare, sister,' she continued, turning away impatiently, "I am getting so morbid and moody that the sight of our beautiful evening star exasperates me. She looks so calm and cheerful, while we—" And here she broke off again.

"I don't think it exactly moodiness, dear," said the other lovingly. "Perhaps by and by, when we have had a little meat—"

"Steak and stars!" laughed Mena Hathaway. "What a very absurd conjunction; food is your panacea for everything. But, Meta, don't you ever grow hungry hearted?" Then without waiting for a reply, she continued: "I do. Now, sister, don't think me foolish and weak when I tell you that to-night I believe in Lewis Thurston. I think there was some mystery at the foundation of our sad affair, which I might have unravelled had I not been so horribly proud. Don't look so intolerant, dear. I know that any explanation would be vain now—know that in all probability Marion Leslie holds the place in his heart I once possessed; but that don't alter my belief in him. You never saw him, Meta. Let me see—our last meeting was on the very evening you returned from Germany. Don't you remember, you hadn't been home but an hour or so when he came. He couldn't stay but a few minutes, but promised to return, if possible, in order to make the acquaintance of my darling little twin sister, and—" Here the retrospect was broken into by a sudden sob.

"Mena Hathaway,"—and the sister's voice had in it a healthy tone of indignation—"Lewis Thurston is dead to you, whether he is to be believed in or not, and the calling up of that harrowing time is not wise for either of us. He, without one word of explanation, wrote asking to be relieved from his engagement. You have not seen or heard from him since. And I, for one, cannot but think that no real love could ever have demeaned itself in that manner. Come now, dear, and help me fold this dress. Miss Leslie will be getting impatient, and I must take it home as quickly as possible."

"I wish I were going with you," said Mena wistfully, as with a good-bye kiss Meta took her bundle and turned away into the twilight.

"What for?" And she turned almost fiercely, and looked into the sad, longing eyes. "So that you may make your misery the more complete by a look at the brilliant beauty he has chosen to supplant your poor little fragile self? Better stay at home, my darling." And with another kiss on the quivering rosebud mouth, she hastened away.

"I wish," she murmured, "that Mena could be convinced of that fellow's worthlessness. Her love for him would long ago have been turned to contempt, had it not been for her strange faith in his nobility. I always mistrusted that he somehow suspected father's pecuniary condition, and anticipated matters by breaking the engagement. I wish I could see the man once; two minutes would serve to give him my opinion of his shameful conduct. Harry never could have acted so."

And then her thoughts went back a few months, to a time when her lover had been taken from her by a power stronger than his own—a power whose working no mortal dares question.

"I am glad it was death," she murmured. "That is the kindest, after all." But, notwithstanding, there were tears in the patient eyes as she stood on the stoop of Miss Marion Leslie's elegant home, and she stopped a moment to wipe them off, before ringing the massive bell at her right.

"Tell Miss Leslie that I wish to see her before I go," she said, to the servant who took the robe from her hand. "I will wait her leisure here." And she walked into the sitting-room, and seated herself back in a shadowed corner. The gas had been lit in the hall, and was faintly reflected in the little apartment, in which there was no other light.

She sat there for an hour or more, but no Miss Leslie appeared. Probably the fact of a waiting seamstress had entirely escaped her memory, and Meta Hathaway had just decided that she must return home without the wherewithal for a nutritious supper, when in from the adjacent dining-room came two gentlemen. One she immediately recognized as Miss Leslie's brother, the other she never remembered having seen; but Mr. Leslie's call of "Thurston," soon satisfied her of his identity with her sister's former lover.

"I will wait until they go out," she decided quickly. "They won't be likely to stay long."

But neither gentleman showed any desire for an immediate change. Lewis Thurston stood over by the mantel, directly opposite the door, while the light fell full upon his face.

"I think, Albert," said he, evidently continuing a conversation began in the other room, "that few women are worth so much. In fact I haven't the faith in them I once possessed. You have often wondered that I do not marry. I never told you my heart history, never told any one; but to-night perhaps it will help you, in so far as it shows that you are not the only one who has suffered from woman's perfidy. Three years ago I was engaged, and only waited the return from Europe of the sister of my betrothed, to be made one with the woman I loved. Well, the sister came home, and on the night of her return I visited the house. I could stay but a few moments, having an engagement elsewhere that I was obliged to keep; but I promised to return again, if possible, that evening. And with her kiss on my lips—it burns there yet—I went away, concluded my business as quickly as possible, and returned to her. Well, Albert,"—and here the speaker's voice grew hard and dry—"I found her, but there was a stranger with her—a dark-faced, handsome fellow. She looked into his eyes with just as much fondness as she ever looked into mine. His arms were around her. I waited until I had seen their lips meet, and then rushed from the house, only desirous of getting away before I should throttle both."

Meta Hathaway glided out of her corner, and stood before the two men.

"Mena!" And Lewis Thurston's lips grew white, and his voice had in it a ring of pathos and longing which went deep into both listeners' souls.

"No," she said simply. "Not 'Mena.' I am Meta. It was I you saw that night in the conservatory. Mena was waiting for you in the library."

She made no apology for listening; in truth none was required. He walked back with her to the little room where Mena sat holding sad converse with the stars, and for once woman's faith had its abundant reward.

THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE WORLD.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Blessings on the Hand of Woman!
Angels guard its strength and grace,
In the palace, cottage, hovel—
O, no matter where the place!
Would that never storms assailed it,
Rainbows ever gently curled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rocks the world.

Infancy 's the tender fountain;
Power thence with Beauty flows:
Woman 's first the streamlet's guidance,
From it soul with body grows—
Grows on for the good or evil,
Sunlight streamed or tempest hurled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rocks the world.

Woman, how divine your mission
Here upon the natal sod:
Yours to keep the young heart open
To the holy breath of God!
All true triumphs of the ages
Are from mother love impearled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rocks the world.

Blessings on the hand of woman!
Father, sons and daughters cry,
And the sacred song is mingled
With the worship in the sky—
Mingles where no tempest darkles,
Rainbows evermore are curled—
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rocks the world.

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

HESTER'S ASTOUNDING DISCOVERY.

After Hester's remark about the death of her pretended father, recorded in the preceding chapter, and her shuddering pantomime of horror, Mrs. Oliver sat silent for a moment, and then said:

"Do not suffer your thoughts to dwell upon that, dear Estelle. You were with him at the last; you did all that was possible to soothe and console him in his last hours, and that must be your consolation now."

"Alas! I was not in a condition to be with him," she faltered. "Others ministered to him while I lay stunned and helpless, threatened with brain-fever. The skill of the physician who was with me saved me from that, and I owe Dr. Macon such a debt of gratitude, that if my heart were not irrevocably given to Raymond I think it would turn to him. But of course he only thought of me as his patient, and I love Ray so dearly that no [illegible] could come between me and him."

[illegible] Oliver listened in astonishment to this [illegible] of Dr. Macon, and wondered if Miss [illegible] mind was quite right, thus to refer [illegible]mparative stranger. Not knowing [illegible] to make she sat silent, and Hester [illegible]atched her through the fingers of [illegible]hat was still held over her face. [illegible] mention of Macon, and her grati[illegible], she had prepared the way for his [illegible]reafter in the character of her [illegible]hat he would so appear, and that [illegible] long, she felt perfectly assured. [illegible]y said:

[illegible]k it strange that I should speak [illegible]bility of liking any other man as [illegible]darling Ray, and if you saw Dr. [illegible] would think him too ugly and [illegible]ce to inspire any other feeling [illegible]sion in the heart of a young girl. [illegible]s full of gratitude to him for the [illegible]e rendered me in my forlorn condi[illegible] his lack of personal attractions [illegible]y eyes, more than compensated by [illegible]ence of his heart."

"I w[illegible]d not advise you to speak of him in [illegible]s to Raymond. He has a jealous [illegible] and he loves you to that degree that he [illegible] not bear to think of any one besides him[illegible]lf being looked on as a possible lover."

"How prudish you are, Marion; but you are quite right in this case. I dare say I shall never see Dr. Macon again, but I shall always remember him with kindness. 'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?' Nothing, of course, in the present position of affairs. My headache has come back, and—and I hardly think my brain is quite settled yet. Don't think me rude, my dear friend, if I ask you to leave me alone, that I may try to sleep again."

Mrs. Oliver arose, drew in the shutters, and rang for Martha to take the tray away. When this was done, she arranged Hester's pillows, and softly said:

"I will leave you now, Estelle. I hoped the strong tea would benefit your headache. The next best remedy is silence and repose, and I will take care that no one interrupts you for the next few hours."

"How considerate you are, Marion. Keep everybody away from me, and I shall do very well. By to-morrow I shall be well enough to join you in the parlor, and then I will try to show you some of that grace and sweetness of manner which poor Ray attributed to me."

Mrs. Oliver left the room, at a loss to know what estimate to form of her new acquaintance. That she was not the being De Lorme had depicted to her in glowing words, she felt convinced. In Estelle Landry she had expected to find a straightforward, affectionate creature, with her heart on her lips, and with all the buoyant brightness of early youth; but in place of that, she found a sphinx that she, with all her natural acuteness, could not understand.

When the sound of her visitor's footsteps died away, Hester sat up and waited a few moments. The opportunity to examine thoroughly the contents of Miss Landry's trunk was at last hers, and she hastened to avail herself of it as speedily as possible.

There was a window in the dressing-room that looked out on a verdant grass-plot shaded by an immense willow-tree, the drooping branches of which fell almost to the ground. [illegible]hite muslin curtain was looped back, but Hester lowered, and then she bolted the door communicating with the room that lay back of her own.

The lid of the large trunk was then thrown back, and Hester commenced her investigations. She found several packages of letters from different correspondents. There were many from Annette De Lorme, and several from her mother, giving good advice to the young girl she expected to claim as her daughter at a future day.

Hester's lip curled disdainfully as she glanced over these, and she threw them back, muttering:

"You will expect to rule *me*, I dare say, ma'am, as you have always domineered over others; but when Raymond is once safely mine, I will show you that *I* am not to be held in thrall by you, nor shall my husband be, if I can help it."

The other letters were of no importance—they were only school-girl epistles, written by Estelle's young friends who were away from her during the vacations, and Hester scarcely vouchsafed them a moment's attention.

The desk was subjected to a most rigorous examination, but no secret drawer was detected, and as yet she had found no scrap of writing that she could identify as that of Estelle Landry.

Annoyed at this, she threw the desk back into the empty trunk, and was struck by the hollow sound it returned. With sudden eagerness she knelt down, sounded the bottom with her fingers, and then peered downward with the conviction that there was a false bottom to the trunk, beneath which was concealed something that she felt was of vital importance to herself.

In a few moments a tiny leather strap was discovered resting against the front side, and a few efforts raised the thin plank which had been placed there, no doubt, to conceal something which Estelle wished to guard from the knowledge of every one.

Hester lifted it far enough to enable her to run her hand beneath, and she triumphantly brought forth a thin morocco-covered volume, with Estelle Landry's name on the back in gilt letters, and underneath them was a strip of paper on which was written:

These are the secret thoughts of my soul:
Let no profane eye glance upon them;
Let no strange hand attempt to turn the leaves.

Hester examined the writing carefully, and found that it was so similar to her own that she would find little difficulty in imitating it. She then replaced the things she had taken out, after ascertaining that nothing else was concealed beneath the false bottom. She looped back the window curtain, unlocked the door, and taking the diary in her hand, went into her own room, and sat down near the window to violate the sanctity of the pages which such pains had been taken to conceal from every eye save that of the writer.

The diary ran only through the last year of Estelle Landry's life, and it was a record as sweet as it was artless, of the attachment she had formed for Raymond De Lorme. Scraps of poetry, evidently of her own composition, were scattered through it, and Hester felt that she had secured a clue to her sister's nature which would prove invaluable to her.

As she read on, she began to feel almost jealous that another woman should so love Raymond, and express her conviction that the affection was fully reciprocated. What if, after all, he should find something wanting in *her* which this other one possessed? Could she love him so adoringly, yield to him so implicitly, as it was evident poor Estelle did? She had strong doubts as to her will or ability to do so, but she thought, what did that signify when he was once entrapped into a marriage with her? In his boyhood Raymond had been strongly attracted by her, and in his manhood she believed she could renew the spell, and make him think her one of the most charming of women, even if he found her less submissive as a wife than he had once expected. The sweetest and most placid of girls often showed the virago after marriage, she argued, and Raymond would only think that he had deceived himself when he thought his Estelle all gentleness and amiability.

She turned over the leaves rapidly, and glanced down page after page, wondering how any girl could be what she considered so mawkishly sentimental; but suddenly she grew pale as death, and then the blood rushed in a fiery torrent to her face, as she gasped:

"Good Heavens! can it be so? What a narrow escape I have had! If I had not found this, how utterly I should have been ruined! Stop—I must think—I must remember if anything I have said can have compromised me. If I had suspected this, I should have been very guarded when I spoke of Raymond."

She pressed her hands to her brow, and tried to recall all that had passed between herself and Herbert with reference to young De Lorme, and she breathed more freely when she remembered that nothing had been said by herself which could not be attributed to her desire to conceal the actual position Estelle Landry held toward Raymond.

The paragraphs which had so much excited her were dated in the previous May, and ran as follows:

"What would my father say if he knew what I have been persuaded to do? Oh! it was wrong, it was weak; but how could I resist the entreaties of my poor miserable Raymond to give him the certainty that he must find me all his own when he comes back from that cruel tour which they forced him to take?

"When I think now of that scene in which we stood hand in hand before the magistrate, and went through the civil ceremony which binds me to him forever, I shrink and shiver; but I am not in my heart sorry for what I have done. He has promised me that my father shall never know the disobedience of which I have been guilty; nor shall any one else know that I clandestinely gave him my hand on the eve of his departure.

"In law I am the wife of Raymond, but until the sacred rites of the church shall hereafter hallow the bond, he has pledged his honor that he will make no effort to claim me. We belong to each other, and that is enough for the present. I trust to him to shield me from my father's displeasure by sacredly guarding the secret known to us alone.

"When my aunt allowed me to visit Anna Greyson, who lives near the border line of Connecticut, she did not dream of the advantage Raymond would take of that visit. He ran down from Boston two days before the ship sailed. I went out with him to take a drive, and then he seemed so wretched, so unwilling to leave me without some certainty that I would be his, that I had not the heart to refuse his prayer.

"We crossed the line between the two States, went to the house of a country magistrate, who did not trouble himself about anything but his fee, and in ten minutes after we entered, the ceremony was over.

"We went back to Mr. Greyson's, and Raymond took leave of us half an hour later, and went away to embark on his voyage, as he had sacredly promised me before I consented to pledge myself to him in this informal manner.

"I do not regret what I have done; why should I do so, when I have nothing to dread as to discovery? We shall guard our own secret so well that no one can ever suspect it, and throughout our lives this little bit of romance will be ours to recall and talk over when we are together and no listening ear can hear us.

"Oh, Raymond! lord of my life, joy of my heart! when you can come back to me and openly claim the hand so strangely plighted to you, I shall be the happiest of mortal women. Think of me ever—let your life be one long dream of me, as mine is of you."

Hester read these lines over and over, and sat as one petrified. Had she known or suspected this, she would never have dared to attempt the wrong which must now be consummated, or utter ruin must overtake her.

Raymond De Lorme was already married, and in giving his hand to her he would unconsciously commit bigamy. But there was no help for it now; and amid all her consternation there was in Hester's heart the triumphant certainty that he was hers, and a barrier that could not be overleaped was placed between herself and Macon.

Should she tell him the truth at once? she asked herself. No—she might endanger herself by doing so before Estelle's mind had been tampered with to such an extent as to preclude a hope of recovery. When she was assured of that, she would inform him of her discovery, and declare that it had just been made.

She would give Macon wealth, and with that he must be satisfied; he must see that now nothing else was possible. She must consent to ratify the vows her sister had made, or be ignominiously hurled from the position she had usurped, and left to irremediable ruin.

The tumult of her thoughts really made her head ache, and she arose to go back to her resting place on the sofa. The diary fell upon the floor, and in lifting it again she discovered that there was a pocket in the back. On opening this, she found several half sheets of paper which had evidently been inclosed in Raymond's letters. She had read over those sent from Europe, and found them to be a mere graphic record of his travels, written in such a manner as to be shown to Mr. Landry, if he desired to see them. But within them came the lines designed for Estelle's eyes alone, and they all commenced with such words as must have told the whole story, even without the evidence of the diary.

"My darling wife" was at the head of each page, and Hester's eyes flashed, and her lips curled, as she read the passionate outpouring of his love for her rival.

"What does it matter?" she muttered. "It is foolish to be jealous of that poor demented creature. *She* can never come between me and Raymond again. Her fate is settled, let what will happen. My position is a very complicated one, but I feel within myself the power to hold the threads of my destiny in my hand, and shape it to please myself. Having gone so far, there is no retreat now; I must fight this battle to the bitter end, let it bring what it may to others."

Hester threw herself on the sofa, and tried to think calmly. What would her mother say, when she found that by her own clever device she had for ever separated herself from the child she so adoringly loved? As the wife of Raymond De Lorme, any association between the two would be simply impossible, and any attempt on Mrs. Blake's part to approach her must be fraught with danger, for the De Lorme family were well acquainted with Mrs. Blake's unhappy history, and they would know that on the daughter of Ellinor Russell she could have no claim.

Hester's heart ached a little when she thought of this, for her affection for her mother was the one tender spot in her nature, and she wept a few tears when she imagined the despair Mrs. Blake would feel, when she knew that by her own act she had severed herself forever from her idolized child.

CHAPTER XX.

HESTER'S CONSUMMATE ACTING.

When tea was over, Mrs. Oliver went in to sit with Hester at her request, and for the first time since his return, Spencer found himself alone with his grandmother. He was very fond of her, and always spoke with perfect freedom of his own affairs in those hours of confidential intercourse. She alone of all his family had not set her face against his union with the woman of his choice, and treated him as if he was almost criminal in thinking of marriage with a penniless orphan girl.

Spencer's parents were both dead, but he had a brother and two sisters very advantageously settled in life, and they naturally expected him to do as well for himself in the matrimonial market as they had done.

That he had failed to do so, they each and all attributed to the influence wielded by Mrs. Spencer over the formation of his character and opinions; for Herbert had been given up to her in his boyhood, and such good as was in him he chiefly owed to the precepts she had instilled into his mind.

Mrs. Spencer was a high-toned woman, and in some respects, still a romantic one. She had made a love match herself, and never regretted it, and she felt that the joy would have gone out of her life if fate had severed her from the one she had chosen. She and her husband had lived together in close and tender union for more than forty years, and the old lady firmly believed that no amount of wealth could compensate for the lack of that love which is the only ægis of wedded bliss.

With such convictions, how could she insist that Herbert must give up his unworldly choice, and follow the example of his brother in getting a rich wife?

Herbert was now discussing his future with the buoyant gladness of a happy lover, and he was trying to demonstrate to his grandmother how possible it would be for her to spend six months of the year in his southern home, and in return, he and his wife would pass a portion of every summer at Seaview.

Mrs. Spencer shook her head, and after a discussion of some length, said:

"I am too old to make such a radical change in my way of life, Herbert. I am used to this place; some of the happiest years of my life have been passed here, and I do not think I could be contented elsewhere. You shall come to me every summer, bringing Marion with you, and I must learn to do without your cheerful daily companionship as well as I can. When Ray comes back, I think he will come to me with his bride to cheer me in my solitude. He likes the North, and Estelle has spent so many years in Newport that she must have stronger attachments there than in her native State. I think they will willingly spend the greater portion of their time in Boston, and much of it with me. That will be some consolation for losing you, my boy. Now tell me about your late journey. I wish to hear all the particulars of poor Armand Landry's death. I am interested in everything that concerns him, for I have known him from his youth, and I loved the girl he first married almost as tenderly as if she had been my own daughter. Poor Nelly! her fate was a sad one, a sad one!"

"Why so? Wasn't he kind to her? I always heard that he was a model husband."

"He adored her; he did all that man could do to render her happy; but—she faded away from his side so mysteriously that—"

Mrs. Spencer broke off abruptly, and after a brief pause, said:

"It does no good to recall all that. Tell me now what I wish to know."

"It is not much. Mr. Landry had been dead several hours when I reached the place to which he had been conveyed. His daughter made an effort to see me, and from her and the physician in attendance I learned all the particulars of the dreadful accident that destroyed him. At first, Dr. Macon thought the injuries far less serious than they proved. There was internal hemorrhage, which of course ended in mortification and death."

"And who took care of him? What sort of people were in that country house? Did they know anything of sickness, and how to alleviate suffering?"

"The family that lived on the place were on the eve of starting for the West when the accident occurred, but a widow lady and her daughter kindly came out from the village and took up their abode at the farm-house, to see that Mr. Landry and Estelle had such care as they needed."

"A widow—and with an only daughter?" asked Mrs. Spencer, almost in a whisper. "What was her name, Herbert? I have an uncomfortable dread that it was— But *she* would not have *dared* to approach him, after all that has come and gone. No, no; it could not be Hagar Blake, though I know that she has lived somewhere in New Jersey for years."

"I do not know her first name, but it was certainly Mrs. Blake who went to him; and I may also tell you that Mr. Landry went out of his way to see her daughter, and give her the power to claim a sum of money which had been set aside for her. His luggage was lost, and in his last hours he dictated to Miss Blake a letter, which Estelle has shown me, stating his intentions, and requiring her to carry them into effect. You are aware of the nature of the claim the girl has upon him."

The old lady listened to this revelation in pale silence. She shivered slightly, and said:

"Yes, I know; and a more tragic story could hardly be told than that involved in the relations of those people toward each other. After all that has been suspected, I do not know how Mrs. Blake could approach Armand Landry. If a man was ever punished for weakness, he has been—aye, bitterly, bitterly. That woman has been the demon of his life, and if I had known or suspected that there was any chance of her being thrown with Estelle, I would have gone to her myself, old as I am. Mr. Landry should have gone alone on that errand; he should not have brought Ellinor's child within reach of that vindictive and unprincipled creature. I almost wonder that she was allowed to escape scatheless."

Spencer gazed at her in astonishment, for by this time her pallor had given place to a red spot on each thin cheek, and her eyes were flashing with excitement.

"Why, grandma, I never saw you so much moved before. What do you know of this woman that is so dreadful? I did not see her myself, for her daughter was ill from overexertion in the service of Mr. Landry, and Mrs. Blake was in constant attendance upon her; but Doctor Macon, who seemed to be a very sensible, gentlemanly person, spoke of her in the highest terms."

"I dare say; she has the education of a lady, and the manners of one, I have been told, but she is a wretch—a demon! The black drop is in her heart, Herbert, and its venom has once been allowed to overflow, with results that should have brought to Hagar Blake the direst punishment known to the law."

Spencer grew pale, and in a low tone, asked:

"Are you sure of this, grandma? It seems a dreadful thing to say, unless you are."

"I am as sure of it as one can be of a thing of which one is not actually cognizant. The family of Ellinor Landry believe that she died from slow poison, administered by a servant at the instigation of this woman. Everything was done for her that change of climate and medical skill could accomplish, but she faded constantly, with symptoms that baffled her physicians. No light was thrown on her case, and young, lovely, and beloved as she was, she was laid in her early grave, a victim, it was then supposed, to some radical defect in her constitution."

She paused, and Spencer asked:

"What led to a different conclusion in your mind, and in that of her relations?"

After some hesitation, Mrs. Spencer told Herbert the story of Mrs. Blake, and how, through the instrumentality of the old slave Zelma, she poisoned Estelle's mother, and then added:

"Mr. Landry took measures to compel Mrs. Blake to come north, where she has since resided. He would have kept the girl, but her mother would not consent to give her up. It was best so, for Hagar Blake's daughter could have been no comfort to him. He suffered such paroxysms of remorse and horror that he could not conceal from Helen the cause of his anguish. She naturally told it to her nearest friends, and from them I heard what I have related to you.

"Nothing saved Hagar Blake from the direst punishment but the existence of that child. She was Armand Landry's daughter, and he cherished for her a very tender affection; so the mother was spared.

"There is something dreadful to me in the thought that, at the last, Mr. Landry was indebted to that woman for the attentions he needed. I suppose he saw the girl, of course."

"Yes; she wrote the letter I told you of, in which her claims were set forth. Estelle is a noble creature; she intends to do even more for them, I think, than her father required. Of course she knows nothing of what you have just told me, and it will be best to allow her to remain in ignorance of the dreadful charges against Mrs. Blake. She says she was very kind to her, and as the woman has a claim on her means, I think it will be better to leave her to discharge it in her own way."

"I can scarcely agree with you. I suppose that Mrs. Blake had some sort of settlement which enabled her to live comfortably, and bring up her daughter well. Beyond that, Estelle shall give her nothing, with my consent. What Mr. Landry designed for his daughter must of course be given to her. Do you know what portion he had assigned her?"

"Fifteen thousand dollars was the sum named, but I am under the impression that he intended that as a provision for both mother and daughter."

"And it is quite enough, too, for persons in their position. If Mr. Landry had not thought so himself, he would have given more, for he was a most liberal man in his dealings. I am sorry you did not see the girl, for I should like to know if she as strikingly resembles Estelle, now she is grown, as I have been told she did in her childhood. Your Aunt Carrie declared to me that but for the difference in size, she could scarcely have told the two apart; and what vexed her yet more was, that both were named for Mr. Landry's mother, though I think Hagar called her child Hester."

"I think the likeness must still be very remarkable, for a man on the train, who was evidently half tipsy, spoke to Miss Landry, and called her Miss Blake. He could scarcely be made to believe that he was mistaken, and that led her to explain to me that this young girl is her half-sister. She spoke so generously of her, that I am sure her feelings will prompt her to do even more than carry out her father's wishes."

Mrs. Spencer sat silent a few moments, as if in deep thought, but not a suspicion of the truth was suggested by what Herbert had just said. An upright, pure woman is not prone to suspicion; and it never entered her head that the girl beneath her roof could be other than the betrothed wife of her grandson.

With a little sigh, she at length said:

"I am sorry they look alike, but I suppose they both carry their father in their face. Of course Estelle can do as she pleases with her own money, but she shall give none of it to Mrs. Blake without knowing how little deserving she is of anything from her generosity. I will not tell her the truth in all its naked horror, but I will make her understand that from *her* hand it is not fitting that favors shall flow on Hagar Blake."

"You have set yourself a very difficult and painful task, grandma, and I advise you to let the whole affair take its course without interference from you. A few thousands, more or less, are of little consequence to Estelle Landry; and if she could be consulted, I am sure she would far rather sacrifice them, than be made acquainted with this dreadful piece of family history."

"You may be right, Herbert," replied Mrs. Spencer, after some consideration. "In my resentment against Hagar, I was forgetting what is due to Estelle herself. The knowledge of her mother's fate would be a dreadful shock to her, and the poor child has suffered enough lately, without inflicting a new pang upon her."

"I think that is the right view of the case, Ma'am; and here comes Marion to help us to a decision."

Mrs. Oliver appeared at the open door, and the old lady hurriedly said:

"I have spoken to you in confidence on this painful subject, and I do not think we have the right to talk of it even with one we trust so implicitly as Marion."

Spencer bowed deferentially.

"That is as you please, of course, grandma; but as Marion is to live with Miss Landry, and as she has probably heard the whole story already from Aunt Carrie, it may be as well to let her know what we have been speaking about."

"Ah, yes, I forgot. I dare say she knows all about it, for Carrie is a talkative woman, and she always hated Mrs. Blake."

By this time Mrs. Oliver had crossed the room and approached them so nearly that she overheard the name of Mrs. Blake, and with a slight curl of her expressive lip, she asked:

"Have you too been speaking of that woman? I have been talking of her with Miss Landry, and I find that she has a sentimental leaning toward her, which almost tempted me to tell her what I have known for a long time. I only refrained because I knew how painful it must be to her to hear such a story as that. She really seems to have been fascinated by Mrs. Blake, and declares it is her duty to make amends both to mother and daughter for what they have suffered through her father."

"She shall not mix herself up with them in any way if I can prevent it," cried Mrs. Spencer, in much excitement. "What can the silly child mean by taking a fancy to that viper? She may give them money, if she insists on it, even more than her father set aside for them; but she shall hold no intercourse with them except through her man of business. I really do not think it would be safe for her to do so."

"On this subject I am afraid you will find Miss Landry intractable, ma'am. She has peculiar ideas, and she is far more tenacious in upholding them than I expected to find her. She talks as if she can never repay those people for their kindness to her, the physician included; and she bade me say to you, Herbert, that she wished Dr. Macon's fee to be sent to him at once, and as much more given to Mrs. Blake, as she may need it before her father's bequest can be placed at the command of her daughter."

Spencer replied:

"I have already seen my brother, who has in his hands several thousand dollars belonging to Mr. Landry, and Estelle can command any amount she may desire. I think she is quite right to be liberal to those people, for they certainly did all they could for her in her painful condition. But after hearing what my grandmother has told me, I do not think it will be right for her to keep up any correspondence with them; a thing she declared to me she meant to do."

"No; it would be shameful—impossible," said Mrs. Spencer very decidedly.

"Yet, if she said she would, she will do it," said Mrs. Oliver. "I never have seen a young girl who seems more inclined to have her own way. Love is really blind, I suppose, or Raymond would never have dwelt as he did on her yielding temper, and believed in her utter devotion to himself."

"Oh, Marion, you cannot doubt the last," said the old lady, in dismay. "My poor boy would break his heart if he thought that—that— But what could she have said, that put such fancies in your head?"

"I did not judge her by what she said of him; for she spoke of Ray as if the dearest hope of her life is to be reunited to him. But soon after uttering a rhapsody of that sort, she would refer to that Dr. Macon in such a way as almost convinces me that the man has established some sort of influence over her, which is as inexplicable as it is traitorous to her betrothed husband. I can only account for the way she talked by supposing that her brain is a little flighty still."

"Ah, yes—that is it. We must not lay any stress on words spoken in her present half-dazed state. When Estelle is herself again, we shall find her all that Raymond declared her to be."

Spencer now said:

"I think it will be simple justice to let poor Estelle alone for the present. We have talked her over sufficiently, and I insist that we shall leave her to speak for herself, when she is strong and well enough to do so. Come, Marion, and sing me some of your old songs. I hope you have not forgotten those that I love best."

Mrs. Oliver wished herself to escape from any further conversation about her new acquaintance, and she moved with alacrity toward the open piano. Her voice was sweet and flute-like, and the lovers soon forgot all the world but themselves.

Mrs. Spencer softly left the room, and sought that of her young guest. She found that the gas had been extinguished, and the apartment was only lighted by the rays of the rising moon which fell through the open window.

Hester, in a white dressing robe, reclined in a large chair beside it, and when Mrs. Spencer's light step was heard, she called out:

"Is that you, grandma? pray come in. I thought you would give me a good-night kiss before retiring, and I sat up to wait for you. I had the gas put out because I like the soft light of the moon best, and this is the hour in which I promised to commune in spirit with my own Raymond."

"Then I had better not interrupt you, my dear," said the old lady, smiling faintly as she came forward.

"Oh! I have sent my thoughts over land and sea, and a winged messenger has come to me telling me that my love is true to the tryst; and now I am ready for something more tangible, but hardly less delightful—a kiss from the lips that have so often caressed my Raymond."

She held up her face, which looked almost of sculptured beauty in the soft light of the moon, and her visitor bent forward and kissed the false lips from which she would have recoiled as from the touch of an asp if she had suspected the identity of their owner. As it was, her caress was very tender, and she softly said:

"How lovely you are, my child! In that, at least, Raymond did you no more than justice. I am glad that you think of him much when you are alone, for I know that his heart is wrapped up in you."

"Umph!" thought the girl. "I have not come up to the standard set for me by these absurdly good people; but I will, and they shall think me 'wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best,' till I have won my game at least, and have nothing to fear from their criticisms."

With a faint sigh, she asked:

"Of whom should I think, grandma, but of the one being who is everything to me? I have neither the wish nor the right to dream of any other, for Ray and I are sacredly pledged to each other. Such promises have passed between us as cannot be broken. No, no; we should both be perjured if—if—"

Her voice sunk away as if she had not courage to speak further, and Mrs. Spencer sat down beside her, and in some agitation, asked:

"What were you going to say, Estelle? Is there anything more than a promise between you and my grandson? I hope you did not deceive your own father at—at the vehement solicitation of my impulsive boy?"

Hester bent her head forward, and tears, which she could command at will, flowed through her clasped fingers. In tremulous tones, she said:

"If I dared, I would tell you all; but you would blame me and *him*, and that I could not bear."

The old lady drew her hands down, and with agitation far more real than that exhibited by her companion, said:

"You may tell me, Estelle. I can excuse much in the young; and I really thought it almost wrong to send the poor lad away from you, when he was so unwilling to go. I love him too dearly not to pardon him, let him have done what he may."

"But, grandma, I should die of mortification if—if any one suspected me of—of—"

"Of *what*, child? There can be but one solution to your words, but I did not believe you could be wrought on to do what your father would never have forgiven, much as he loved you."

"No; he would never have forgiven me," repeated Hester, with sudden calmness; "and for his sake, though he is dead, must this secret be held inviolate. I *must* confide it to some one, or I shall die before my love can come to claim me. But to you I can trust it; and hereafter, when the sacred rites of the church have consecrated the informal ceremony that united us, you will be equally reticent, I know; for I would not, for the world, have it suspected even, that Estelle Landry was guilty of an elopement."

"Then it is really true that you are married to my grandson?" said Mrs. Spencer, after a moment of breathless silence. "How was it—how could you manage such a thing as secretly as you seem to have done?"

"I was visiting at Mr. Greyson's, and Ray ran down there to have a last parting interview. We took a drive, crossed the line into Connecticut, and went to a magistrate, who pronounced a form of words over us that satisfied Raymond, and made him more willing to leave me, though neither to him nor to me could that ceremony suffice as anything more than a sacred betrothal.

Mrs. Spencer listened in a species of bewilderment. When Hester paused, she made an effort to ask:

"Had your father or your aunt any suspicion of what had occurred? It seems strange to me that you could have kept it from Mrs. Murray. I understand now how it was that Raymond went off in such good spirits."

"If my father had suspected the truth, I should have been overwhelmed with his reproaches. Indeed, I cannot say to what lengths he might not have gone in his displeasure. He had decided that this marriage should not take place till after the return of Raymond, and he would have resented bitterly the ruse of which we were guilty. For that reason we were very cautious not to betray ourselves. It was easy enough to keep Aunt Murray in ignorance of what had been done, for she is too much of an invalid to take much interest in anything except her own ailments. Besides, dear grandma, I could never bear to have this escapade of ours made known. It would be a bitter humiliation to me, and also a disrespect to the memory of my father. It was a romantic folly of which I have not repented, but I should do so if it became known to those who could and would comment severely upon it. You I can trust with my secret, for you are good and gentle, and you will not willingly throw a stain on the name of your grandson's future wife."

"You are quite right to confide in me, my poor child," was the affectionate response, for the old lady's heart was touched, "and I can pledge you my word that I will be as reticent on this subject as you can desire. I shall be as anxious to guard your secret from the knowledge of others as you can be yourself. Of course, when Ray hears of Mr. Landry's death, he will come back to claim you openly at once."

"Yes—I hope so. I have said to Herbert that I would advise him to finish his tour; but that was only intended as a blind, for I had made up my mind to confide to no one my peculiar and painful position. But your kindness to me went to my heart, and I began to feel that I must speak to some one that is competent to advise me, and—and—who will give me sympathy."

Hester here threw herself forward, buried her face on the bosom of Mrs. Spencer, and gave way to what seemed a burst of hysterical emotion. The old lady soothed her tenderly; said all that could comfort her; gave every pledge that was required; and the consummate actress gradually regained composure, and thanked her with all the grace of expression she had at her command.

When this was over, she suddenly asked:

"What arrangements has Herbert made about the voyage, and—and where are my father's remains?"

"They have been taken to a chapel, and masses are to be chanted over them. They will then be placed in a vault till you embark; but that cannot be in less time than a week hence, Estelle."

"A whole week! Is there no possibility of getting away sooner than that?"

"No, dear. A friend of ours commands a steamship which leaves on this day week, and Herbert thought it better to take passage with him. Besides, he wishes to give you time to regain your strength before going away. I hope that you do not feel anxious to run away from me, Estelle?"

"Oh! no, indeed, dear grandma; I beg that you will not think that. If I consulted my own inclinations alone, I would remain here till Ray comes back; but I promised poor papa, and I cannot feel right till I have laid him where he wished to be placed—by the side of my beloved mother. Till that duty is performed, I shall not feel as if I have the right to look forward to the happiness that is in store for me when my dearest love returns."

Hester was tired of the scene, and she suffered her voice to fall into a cadence so sad and weak that Mrs. Spencer began to fear she had been too heavily taxed in her supposed state of weakness. She arose, and kissing the girl tenderly, said:

"I think I fully understand your feelings, my dear, and I will respect your wishes sacredly. You are worn out now with all you have gone through, so I will leave you to the repose you so greatly need."

"Good-night, grandma. I feel as if in you I have the best and most considerate of friends."

Mrs. Spencer left the room, and the plotter sunk back on her chair with a smile of triumph on her expressive lips, forgetful that "the way of transgressors is hard," and that "the wages of sin is death."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—Peace is the evening star of the soul, as virtue is its sun, and the two are never far apart.

TRUE UNTO DEATH

BY MRS. M. A. KIDDER.

I bent my head to catch the sound
Of the tremulous parting breath,
The last sad words from the young wife's lips,
That would soon be closed in death,
And I caught the whispered sentence low,
Of the sufferer: "Call him Seth."

"The name of the man who has crushed your heart!"
I cried, as her eyes grew dim;
Then the lingering blood-streams dyed her cheek,
And rose to her forehead's brim:
"Though *he* has been false, thank God," she said,
"That I have been *true to him!*"

Then I thought of the wives of the present day,
And the wives of long ago,
Who have suffered more than tongue could tell
By the cruel word and blow,
By the shameless lives of their wedded lords,
Too sad for the world to know.

Then I wondered if *all* these injured ones,
Be they many, or be they few,
Could have bared such white and spotless souls
To their Maker's searching view,
As this fair young wife, who, through grief and pain,
To the false had been so true.

Oh, stricken wives, in your cheerless homes,
Hope on, smile on, I pray;
For help shall come in God's good time,
Aye, the recompensing day,
Though the Gates of Pearl *may* open first,
To let in the morning ray.

Though your hearths be desolate and cold,
Let your altar fires burn bright,
Nor do a sin to revenge a sin;
"Two wrongs ne'er made one right:"
Let your false one see his sin or wrong
By the aid of your vestal light!

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BOY AND MAN.—A LIFE STORY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

We do not relate the following for the purpose, particularly, of pointing a moral—though there is a moral most emphatic in the case;—nor do we present it as a rule of life for the guidance of influential men—though many men might profitably take a hint therefrom. We tell it as a simple story of real life, and though it may by some be deemed an exceptional case, yet all will admit that the exception is a very pleasant one. Some will read this to whom the story will not be new, but they will enjoy its perusal none the less for that.

In the year 1852 there was upon the Poor Farm of Winford a boy named David Carlton. He was a child of misfortune, and a dark cloud had rested upon the early morning of his life. His mother had been a bright, winsome girl, betrayed and forsaken, and finally cast upon the town for support. So her child was born a pauper. She had lived to nurse it a few short months, and had then died, and from that time the child had been the charge of the Superintendent of the Farm. Whatever may have been the developed character of the father of that child, he must have possessed strong manly qualities at heart, for the boy betrayed hereditary points of mental power which could not have been derived from his mother. Yet from his mother he had inherited a mildness and evenness of temper which served him well in the trying ordeal of his boyhood.

The children from the Town Farm (or Poor Farm) attended the common school of the district within which the Farm was located; but they could not be like other children. Even the parents of the more fortunate scholars—Christian men and women they were—did not wish that their children should associate too freely with the paupers; and we cannot wonder that the children themselves took the lesson, and acted upon it. As a rule—and, under the circumstances, a very natural rule—these alms-house children did not progress very much in the way of useful education; but there were exceptions to the rule; and David Carlton was one of the exceptions. In spite of the slights which were put upon him he learned rapidly, and he was a good boy. It was his goodness and mildness which helped him. He never complained, but bore his unfortunate lot with meekness, and tried to merit the good opinion of those who had him in charge.

Capt. Tom Richards was the overseer of the Poor Farm, and he liked the boy. And Capt. Tom's wife liked *him*, too; and they helped him to study and to learn.

"Poor boy!" said Mrs. Richards,—and she said it more than once,—"he'll never make much way in the world. I wish he had more spirit. He bears too much. He's too meek and tender-hearted altogether!"

In May of 1852, David Carlton was twelve years of age. The date of his birth was set down in the record of the alms-house, and on this twelfth anniversary thereof Capt. Tom, from his own purse, gave him a new suit of clothes; and when the lad had donned the garb the Captain's wife declared that there wasn't a better looking boy in the town. "O! if he only had a little more spirit!"

Andrew Bishop was the leading merchant, and, in fact, the leading man, of Winford. He was a capable business man, and he had been fortunate, and his wealth gave him power and station. Mr. Bishop had signified his desire to take a smart, intelligent boy into his store, to bring him up to business. Capt. Tom thought here would be a chance for David, so he took the lad with him to the village, and called upon Mr. Bishop at his dwelling. The boy was introduced to the merchant, and when the Captain had explained his errand David was directed to retire into another room.

Now it so happened that in the partition between the two rooms was a window—and this window was open—and thus the boy heard distinctly all that was said by the men in their consultation. He heard Capt. Tom speak in terms of praise and commendation. There was a brief pause, and then Mr. Bishop replied,—

"No, no, Captain Richards, I cannot take him. I do not blame the boy. It is not my horse's fault that he is a horse; but being a horse, I cannot admit him to my parlor. So it is not David Carlton's fault that he is a child of disgrace; but the shame being upon him, I cannot place him in a position which would involve his association with the members of my family."

"But," urged Richards, "this boy is good and true."

"But he cannot shake off the dust of the shame that is upon him," interrupted Bishop. "What is born with the flesh will be manifest in the man. Put him upon a farm, Captain. Let him find a home among the lowly and the humble, and then his misfortune may not be flung in his face."

"As YOU would fling it!" retorted the Captain, in high dudgeon.

"As *I* would fling it?"

"Aye,—as you fling it, even now! O! if the boy ever has a chance, I pray God he may improve it, and stand your equal! It is in him!"

And with this the irate captain called for the boy, and left the merchant's mansion.

"You don't ask me if Mr. Bishop will take you," said Capt. Tom, after they had been upon the road a time in silence.

"There is no need," answered Daniel. "I heard all that he said."

"You heard?"

"Yes,—every word. I could not help it.—But don't say any more now. Let me think."

That night David Carlton sat in his little attic chamber and thought. He sat upon his low bed a while, and then he paced to and fro; and could Mrs. Richards have seen him now, as he walked up and down the cage that confined him, she would have seen what she had never seen before. The mildness of the woman had given place to the fierce impetuosity of the man. The gentle character of the mother had been replaced by the stern and uncompromising possibilities of the father.

He spoke but one sentence aloud. It was near midnight when he stood in the centre of the room, and smote his hand upon his breast.

"If I live," said he, "Captain Richards' prayer shall be answered! If my life is spared, I will not rest until I stand, acknowledged by the world, as the equal, at least, of Andrew Bishop!"

Then he clasped his hands, and raised them toward heaven; and upon his bended knees he added,—

"God help me to win the victory in honor and in truth!"

On the following morning the boy called Capt. Richards apart, and asked that he might be permitted to go forth and seek his own fortune.

"If I do not find a good home," said he, "where I can do as I know you would wish me to do, I will come back to you, and work for you as you shall direct."

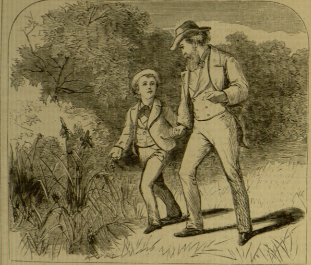
The captain saw the new man in that boyish face, and he was resolved to trust it.

"Have you any money?" he asked.

"Yes,—I have enough."

"Then go,—and may the blessing of God go with you!"

David Carlton went forth, on that spring morning of 1852, with the will to be a MAN. Under all was the same gentleness and goodness which had marked his early boyhood, but brought now to the surface was the quality of iron which had lain so long dormant. He had a single aim of exalted manhood, and he would mount the ladder and climb, if the strength were given him. Nothing should swerve him from his purpose—no lust of gain, no craving of appetite, and no seduction of pleasure. He had counted the cost; he had measured the distance; he had considered his resources; and he had computed the time. All he asked not already within his control was life and opportunity; and for these he prayed.



He would go far away from his New England home, and he struck for the great West. He found work upon the road—he never begged,—and the autumn found him in a young and vigorous city of the new empire of Industry and Development. And he was stronger than he had been when he left the Poor Farm of Winford,—he was stronger in body, and his confidence in himself was stronger. Could such a youth fail, while truth and honor were his chosen henchmen? Such a failure were next to impossible.

David Carlton had no taste for mercantile pursuits. He sought first to occupy his mind, and to that end he found his way into the office of a good lawyer; and here he worked hard—worked so hard and so well, that he was called to the bar before he was twenty-one. As his mind grew stronger and broader he developed an organizing quality, and very soon he assumed the lead in important matters of social and political economy. He sought to develop the resources of the country about him, and thus he became interested in improvements of all kinds. His growing manhood strengthened as it grew; and while in the management of grave affairs he could be stern and uncompromising for honor and right, in his social relations the old gentleness and mildness, coming to the surface in bright ripples and in sunny glowing, made him beloved by all who were admitted to his confidence. And so the years passed on.

Many of our readers remember the startling social event which transpired in a certain New England town during the month of July, 1870. We shall call the town Winford, as we have called it heretofore. And on that July day came a man to Winford who was received with honor and with public ovation. We could call a name which all the country would know—a name which has sounded with praise from the Atlantic to the Pacific—the name of one whom thousands have delighted to honor, and who is to-day the idol of the people among whom he lives, and for whose good he labors;—but we will call him DAVID CARLTON, as we called him before.

And David Carlton came back, after the lapse of the years, to visit the place of his clouded birth. He came heralded by the newspapers—came the representative of a great and grateful people—came shining with fame and renown—came possessed of a material wealth equal to more than was represented upon the books of the Assessors of the whole town of Winford. He came, and he met Mr. Andrew Bishop; but he did not find it in his heart to accept Mr. Bishop's eagerly extended hospitality. He found Capt. Tom Richards, now grown old, but hale and hearty still—found him, not upon the Poor Farm, but upon a little farm of his own in the same old school district; and he spent two days and two nights beneath the old man's humble roof.

It was a grand season for Captain Tom. His joy was so big that he broke down in its utterance. He could hardly believe his own senses. Could it be possible that the Man of fame and the pauper Boy of the other days were one and the same person?

"Yes," said Carlton, with a proud and happy light in his eyes; "and it was your prayer, Captain Tom, that first lifted my heart to its grand purpose. When I had heard Mr. Bishop brand me and cast me out, my heart sank within me; but when I heard your words of fiery reproof, my heart leaped with gratitude; and when, in that man's presence, you prayed God that I might stand his equal, the resolve was born within me which hath borne this fruit! Thou hast been to me a father, and henceforth be it mine to make the burden of thy life light and blessed."

And in the soft twilight of the summer evening David Carlton and Captain Tom walked out upon the verdant lawn, and their hearts were attuned to that blissful worship of the Infinite Goodness which only those can know whose lives have been spiritually pure and truthful.

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EXPLICIT.

We had heard stories of the same kind before, and read them, too; but as our old friend and comrade, Tom Purchell, told this, we deemed it as ridiculously funny as though nothing of the kind had ever before happened.

During the war Tom had the misfortune to be wounded at Antietam, and was for a time laid up in hospital at Harrisburg. He got well; came home; and thrived; and during the past summer he took it into his head to revisit some of the old scenes, planning to take Harrisburg in his way. At Reading he took the saddle, intending to plod through Berks and Lebanon at his leisure. Toward evening, on a pleasant day, he reined up at the gate of a way-side cot where he saw a portly, red-faced man standing. Tom thought the man's face was familiar, and he addressed him,—

"My dear sir, haven't I seen you before?"

The man removed the pipe from his mouth, and shook his head blankly.

"Might I ask your name?"

"Yar!—Mine name ish Harnsh Swifenpettelbernmeistergofen."

"I think I must have been mistaken," nodded Tom, with a smile. "But, my good man, will you have the kindness to direct me upon the right road to Harrisburg?"

"To Harrisburg?—Yar!" The pipe was again removed, and a cloud of smoke puffed forth. "You see dat roat on te hill, shoost ober te pig dree?"

"Yes."

"Vell,—pe shoost so shure as you never vash tat you don't take *dat* roat, pecause it ish not te right one. But you sees dat leetle roat vat runs town mit te coal-bank on te left?"

"Yes,—I see it."

"Vell, dat ish not te roat, too. Now mind dis vat I tells you. You moost go right py te barn dere, vat you sees pefore you,—and ven you sees te roat crook shoost so, like my arm, you vill keep right on till you gits furder; an' den you vill turn te pig rock right round to de right, mit a mill over te pridge, and a house over te mill,—an' dat house ish vere mine brooder Franz lives. Mine brooder can told you mooch better as I can.—But, mine frient,—shoost mind ven you comes mit te two roats vat runsh py de old parn shingled mit schtraw, you mushn't take not one ob dem roats, pecause—"

Tom waited to hear no more. Without even thanking old Hans, etc., for his trouble, he put spurs to his horse, trusting to his knowledge of the compass to guide him until he could gain a more reliable direction. C.

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SCIENCE.

C. G. S. writes: "I have had an argument with a friend who asserts that a tiger is a cat. I maintain that while they both belong to the same family—to wit, the feline—the one is not the other. Failing to agree, we have decided to submit it to you." If your friend means that the tiger belongs to the same species as the ordinary domestic cat, he is mistaken. The tiger and the cat are both members of the group of carnivorous animals known as the *Felidæ* or cat tribe, which also comprises the lion, the leopard, the panther and the lynx. Thus the Latin name by which the naturalist designates the tiger is *Felis tigris*, the lion, *Felis leo*, the cat, *Felis catus*. You are right in your conclusion that the tiger and the cat belong to the same family. Generically, they are both cats; specifically, they are distinct.

The chief of the mineralogical department in the British Museum, Mr. Nevil-Story-Maskelyne, recently lectured at the Royal Institution on meteorites. The distinguished physician, Sir Henry Holland, who, in his eighty-fifth year, maintains, as President of this association, that interest in scientific pursuits which has characterized him through life, occupied the chair, and was supported by his friend Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister. The lecturer classified meteorites into three divisions: *siderites*, principally iron; *siderolites*, iron and stone; and *aerolites*, mostly stone. Their chemical composition includes about one third of the known elements. Mr. Maskelyne did not think that they were of solar or lunar origin. Their constitution chemically differs from that of the sun as now known to us; and he thought their velocity incompatible with the theory that they in any way come from the moon.

Mr. W. W. Wood, an English resident of Manilla, the capital of the Philippine Islands, desiring to ascertain whether, as has often been asserted, a shock of earthquake would detach the keeper of a permanent magnet, and cause it to fall to the ground, has kept such a magnet and keeper suspended in his study at that place for many years. Most of our readers have seen the keeper, or piece of metal, which is placed against the poles to connect them, on the ordinary horse-shoe magnet. Mr. Wood says that his keeper has never fallen from the magnet even on the occasion of the severest earthquakes; and it was exposed to that of 1863, which was very destructive to the city of Manilla and the adjacent districts.

Baron von Liebig, in the *Annalen der Chemie und Pharmacie*, claims priority to Soubeiran, the French chemist, in the discovery of chloroform, and, in the absence of any statement to oppose his, seems to have established his claim. The *Journal of Applied Chemistry*, however, calls attention to the fact that he says nothing about Mr. Samuel Guthrie, of Sackett's Harbor, in this State, who prepared chloroform, under the name of chloric ether, early in 1831, before either the French or the German chemist had discovered it. "Liebig's communication shows that three men nearly simultaneously discovered chloroform, each without a knowledge of the other's work, and that the first on the list was Guthrie."

Ameland is an island of the kingdom of Holland, about thirteen miles long by two miles in width, situated at the mouth of the Zuyder Zee. Its women have the reputation of being the handsomest in Holland. The action of the sea upon the coast is fast wearing away the soil of the island, which is noted for the rich pasturage it affords, and it is ultimately threatened with complete destruction. To avert this a great engineering scheme has been planned, for the purpose of uniting Ameland with the mainland by means of a double dam between them, and the work has already been commenced.

The exploration of Central Asia continues to reveal interesting and important facts in geographical science. In Petermann's *Mittheilungen* is a description of a journey made last summer in Turkestan, by Mr. A. P. Fedchenko. He visited a lofty and extensive glacier region, and found the Terek pass, on the highway from the city of Kokand to Kashgar, so scattered over with great stones that it cannot be used for traffic except in winter, when the snow fills up the spaces between the rocks.

The Dromornis is what Professor Owens proposes to name the genus to which belongs the new large wingless bird, remains of which were recently discovered in the post-tertiary deposits of Queensland, Australia. This genus is allied to the Emeu, the Australian representative of the ostrich family.

The schooner which sailed from Sydney, Australia, for Papua, or New Guinea, conveying the expedition for the geographical, scientific and commercial exploration of that island, has been wrecked on the Barrier Reef, and a large number of persons were lost.

An extraordinary ebullition of the sea near Stromboli, in the Mediterranean, is reported at Naples as having occurred on the eighth of May last.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Zabue (Virginia) says: "Will you please be so kind as to give me a little advice, for I have no one in the world to go to but you, and I am afraid I am on the eve of taking a wrong step. I have been engaged to a young gentleman for some time, until recently my father requested me to discard him; and upon my refusing to do so without good cause, he—my father—threatened to discard me. Had I persisted in disobeying papa, I should have had no place of refuge in the wide world. I have been raised to do nothing but what suited my fancy, and that has been very little, if anything. Papa is as friendly with the gentleman as ever; offers to take him out riding, visits him, and invites him to his house; and papa is not deceitful, nor has he ever been considered unreasonable. Of course the gentleman refuses all papa's advances, and wrote to me telling me that, although he loved me as well as ever, and always should, that he did not blame me; still he would never renew his suit again, to save my life or his; that papa had wronged him, and he would not soon forget it. Now I love this young man as well as I am capable of loving, but I don't think he does right in saying he will never ask me to marry him again. What I want advice about is this: Must I remain unengaged, hoping for his return, which I have not the slightest cause to expect, or engage myself to another who is just as nice in every respect as the other—probably a little better, as the latter is a religious man, and the former anything else—except I do not love the latter, and do love the former? Still I am not willing to make my life a life of 'only waiting' for one I am not quite sure will do the same for me. Will I do right to marry another? or would I be happy married to another? Please don't cast this long letter aside without notice. If I had a mother or older sister to advise me, I would not trouble you—indeed I would not. Tell me what to do, and I shall be everlastingly grateful to you. I shall wait more anxiously than ever until I see my letter among the 'Notices to Correspondents.'" We are sorry for you, and must advise you to wait a little. It would not be right to engage yourself to one man, while you have more love for another. It is not essential to your happiness to be engaged, but it is essential—as your own heart will tell you—to the happiness of married life, that there be true affection. Be a little patient: let No. One take his way. Both he and your father act unaccountably. There is something perhaps you do not know. As to No. Two, it would be wrong to engage affections to him that, for the present, are given to another. They who have no mother need to look to a Divine Father.

J. V. says: "I have been a constant reader of your interesting paper for the last five years. Never having troubled you before, I now come to you for advice. I am in love with a young lady, and have been for a number of years. We were raised right next door to one another, and have loved each other ever since we were large enough to know what love was. But she has one great fault, and that is, telling falsehoods. I think it is more of a habit than any intention to do wrong. I have never said anything about it to her, as I thought it would wear away as she grew older. But it seems as though she does not improve any whatever. I am now twenty-one and she is nineteen years of age. We are both of good families, and it is our parents' desire that we marry. She tells so many falsehoods, such as, that we are engaged, and are going to get married at such and such a time. Now we have never been engaged, nor have I ever spoken of marriage to her yet. She will tell folks that I was around yesterday and took her to a picnic, and probably there was no picnic at all. Her father gave her a ring two or three weeks ago, and she told everybody that I gave it to her for an engagement ring. Now what ought I to do in a case like this? Ought I to tell her of it, or what? I am entirely ignorant of what I ought to do. Now, if you will please let me know, in your answers to correspondents, my duty, I will ever be in your debt. Let me tell you this is her only fault, so I shall wait very impatiently for your answer to this my first letter." If you simply thought of this young girl, but had not won her affection, the folly you describe would be reason enough for dropping all idea of her. But you have loved, and are beloved; and she has a right to consider herself engaged to you. You may have been wrong in not formally settling this matter. Now there is only one thing for you—a frank talk on this matter, which perhaps may clear up all, and leave the sky cloudless. Probably this is only girlish folly. A man may tempt a woman to color things by withholding attentions she has a right to expect, and which her womanly pride will not own to others to be withheld.

Conestoga (Lancaster) says: "I have been an almost constant subscriber and reader of your *Ledger* for the last fourteen years, nearly as long as I could read, and looked with interest to your answers to correspondents, and now I wish to ask a few questions myself. Six months ago I was asked to act as groom's-man for a young friend of mine, and I consented, the time being Thursday, June 6th, the marriage ceremony to be in the church at half-past eight o'clock. I was working out of town, and came home on Saturday, June 1st, to make all arrangements. The evening arrived, but at seven o'clock the groom had no gloves, and sent me to get them, and it being a good distance to the stores, it kept me until twenty-five minutes past eight, and when I came to the house, they had sent for, and succeeded in getting another young man to act in my place, saying they thought I would not come; but I was there before he came, yet they took him. It would be well to say it only took three minutes to drive to church. Now, was it just in him to take the other gentleman in preference to me; and who should be the offended party? I lost all the time, and bore my own expenses. Was that in my place?" He owes you an apology for his conduct. It would not be the thing for you to think or say anything of your expenses, because such services are friendly and honorary, but he acted weakly and offensively, though perhaps not meaning to be rude, and should express his regret for it.

Would-be Artist (Baits' Spring, Chesterfield county, Virginia) says: "I have quite a talent for drawing, so my friends tell me who have seen specimens, and it is natural, as I have never taken but one lesson in my life, and my friends are constantly urging me to cultivate the gift; but in this section it is not easily done to advantage, as there are no competent instructors either in drawing or painting. I being a constant reader of New York papers about art matters, etc., have often longed to go there to be taught under some established artist. If not trespassing upon your valuable time, please inform me about what it would cost me to take lessons in painting in New York under a first-class artist, and if there are such that take pupils under their immediate training. And could you tell me about how long it takes young artists generally to learn what is taught in America, before they go to Europe to finish their course of study? And any other wise suggestions you may please to set forth in your answer, or any advice you may think proper to a person in my situation, will be eagerly looked for and thankfully received by me." You have only to estimate your ability to live in New York. If you were here, and have a decided taste for drawing, etc., you could easily get the opportunity to cultivate your powers and learn, paying your way by your own labor for the instruction.

A Lover of the Ledger says: "I take the liberty of asking you this my first question. I have a cousin who loves me dearly, and his love is fully returned. He has asked me to become his wife, and I have promised, as soon as he has the consent of my parents. He is afraid to ask them, as he is afraid they will refuse him, as we are cousins. My parents are very fond of him, and I know if we were not related they would not refuse him. Do you think there is any harm in marrying cousins? And if my parents should refuse him, and that be the only reason—which I know will be the only one—would it be wrong for me to marry him? We are so devoted to one another it would be hard to be separated. I have said to him, 'You know God has forbidden cousins to marry,' and his reply has been, 'God would forgive us for disobeying, we love each other so dearly.' Now, dear *Ledger*, will you answer this in your next, as I am very anxious to hear from you, and will act as you say. You will oblige." There are some reasons against the marriage of cousins, but you are too late to weigh them. Such marriages are often very happy. Your statement about God's forbidding it, is as doubtful as your cousin's theology. Lovers don't get forgiveness for wrong because they are very fond of one another; but there is no Bible interdict such as you think.

Old Subscriber (Hudson) says: "I am in love with a young lady, and would like to enter into an engagement with her. I am in business, and able to support a wife nicely. I have asked her to engage herself to me. She says she does not love me as a wife ought to love a husband, and declines on that ground. I have kept company with her over a year. When she writes to me she writes with a great deal of affection, and says 'our very warm friendship must be kept up by correspondence, now that we are separated,' etc. Even since she has declined to engage herself to me, she says 'I must write to her, and not give up the correspondence.' Now, Mr. Editor, what would you advise me to do? I think a great deal of her, and do not want to give her up, and yet I do not want her unless I can have her whole love. An early answer will greatly relieve me." Either the young lady is prudent, and wishes to keep you among her resources, or she has some interest in you, but feels exactly as she says. The latter is the conclusion you are bound to accept unless you have some proof to the contrary. The "warm" feeling is frankly owned; nothing is wanted but to make it warmer. Keep writing. "The pen is mightier than the sword."

V. L. (Newark) says: "A shopmate and I were arguing to-day about who did use the expression of 'Veni, vidi, vici.' He said it was Alexander of Rome; I said it was Julius Cæsar. Being a constant reader of your valuable paper, the *Ledger*, I would be very thankful if you would answer me the following questions in your columns: First, who is right or wrong? Second, was there ever a Roman Emperor Alexander?" In reply to your first question, it was Cæsar to whom the words are attributed. Instead of replying to your second, we give you an advice without a fee. Procure a Roman History—Smith's—and take a little of your evening time to study it *together*. It will save you from some temptation, enlarge your views, and it may be, become the beginning of thorough cultivation.

Knowledge (New York) says: "Would you please inform me, through your valuable paper, what would be a good way to improve a person's memory? Also, what kind of books to read to improve in mind and thought? I find a great difficulty in expressing thoughts in a proper form; also, in remembering dates in history, which I am very fond of reading. What method would you advise me to take to improve in general?" We recommend for facility of expression good general literature, and for strengthening the memory, the making of notes and frequent going over the same ground in reading, and if you have opportunity, in conversation. Mere technical rules are little worth, except as exercises of memory.

H. S. (Tappan, Rockland Co., N. Y.)—The words *maximum* and *minimum* have opposite meanings. *Maximum* means the greatest quantity or value attainable in any given case; and *minimum* means the least.

A Girl asks: "Whom did Cain marry?" He married Enoch's mother.

An Anxious Inquirer says: "I have been married eleven years, am twenty-nine years old, and have three children. I love my husband and children with the truest love a wife and mother can bestow. We are poor, my husband being nothing but a riverman, commands but low wages to support us, and out of that we have saved enough to buy a small but very convenient house. I have kept my children dressed decently; have always had clothes for them to attend church; but for myself have been unable to even attend a funeral of my friends, for the want of clothes. I have been looking ahead from year to year, thinking the next would bring better days for me. I am very proud, and would like to look well, but I have been so long without, that my husband thinks I can always do so. He is very prudent, has no bad habits, works steady and hard, never losing a day, kind in every way to his family, and finally, everything a woman can ask for in a husband, if she is willing to forever stay at home, never leaving the house further than the next door neighbor's. I love my home, but this constant, close confinement is killing me. I am called a smart, prudent woman, and could, I think, take care of myself and save a sum besides; and of late I have been thinking of leaving home so much, that I am afraid if I do not I shall lose all interest in this world, and perhaps become insane. God knows I love my family, and wish to do my duty. So please tell me what I am to do, and I will abide by your advice." Show this answer to your husband, who is apparently in the main a sensible and good husband. Your close and unvarying round of duties is probably affecting your health, and rendering you morbid. Your health is more to your husband than money. He should be willing to use money in getting you suitable dress for going out, should take you with him, should attend church with you and make your life interesting, and all these fears will most probably disappear. No money in the bank or in a house could compensate him and your children for the loss of your health, or of your presence and help, if you went to earn money elsewhere. God "hath joined you together;" you are to live together, as "helps meet," and your husband can help you in this, and we greatly mistake him if he fails to do it.

Josie (Alabama) writes: "I have been, as I may say, raised with the *Ledger*, and of course love it very much. Now I am in deep trouble, and come to you, as I value your advice so highly. I have never seen anything in your correspondence columns that I wouldn't be willing to be guided by. My case is this: I am a girl of sixteen years. There is a young man whom I have known but ten weeks. I was in his company a great deal the first four or five weeks. He seemed to care for me from the first he saw of me. I liked him, but nothing more *at first*. In two weeks' time he proposed to me. I did not give him any satisfaction for some time. He seemed so worried, that I finally agreed to marry him inside of a year. He has been devoted to me until the last four weeks, during which time I have not seen him, though he is in town and well, to my certain knowledge. He made several engagements, and then disappointed me in them. Now I am very much worried, and don't know what to do, and am extremely anxious for your advice. Oh, I need some consolation, as my disposition is such that when I love, and fear it is not reciprocated, it nearly kills me. I tried not to care for him, but I couldn't help it. He is a young man very highly thought of by all who know him, and has been considered a man of his word, and a perfect gentleman in every respect. What am I to think and do about it?" Engagements so hastily entered into are very liable to be as hastily broken. You are very young to be engaged, under any circumstances. You had better make up your mind to bear your disappointment like a heroine, and devote yourself to your studies.

Charlie (Norfolk) says: "I always read the Notices to Correspondents in the *Ledger*, and seeing, or at least judging by them, how willingly and cheerfully your paper furnishes information, I have determined to lay my case before you, and ask your advice. I have been going with a young lady for the past [illegible] months, and I like her exceedingly as a friend, th[illegible] I have often told her that I love her, which sh[illegible] lieves and fully reciprocates. I enjoy her co[illegible] very much, and if I were to tell her I was not i[illegible] est, it would cause a serious rupture which n[illegible] time could heal, and I should certainly hate to [illegible] as my companion and friend. Now what I [illegible] know is, had I better tell her at once and end [illegible] ter, that I don't love her sufficiently to marry [illegible] on as I have for some months past, and let h[illegible] by my actions hereafter that I am only in[illegible] don't want to give her up altogether, but I [illegible] can't marry her. Your answer through Notic[illegible] respondents will be eagerly sought after." [illegible] tleman told you he had been lying, or st[illegible] asked your advice, what would it be? You [illegible] lying—thoughtlessly perhaps—but in a matt[illegible] cerns the dearest interests of another. S[illegible] girl your sister, and so treated by a "frie[illegible] you not call him mean, selfish, and unprincip[illegible] if you horsewhipped him, would a Virginia [illegible] him damages? Apology and confession are [illegible] courses we can suggest to you that will no[illegible] continuous falsehood.

Laborer says: "After reading so ma[illegible] swers to correspondents containing such good [illegible] I come to you for information. I am subject to [illegible] cal attacks of acute inflammatory rheumatism; [illegible] recovering from an attack of six months' [illegible] My present location is in a cold climate—long [illegible] and short, damp summers. Do you think my c[illegible] this extreme cold for a more uniform climate w[illegible] beneficial? Do you think the climate in Florida [illegible] be better? And can you direct me to the parts w[illegible] the lumbering business is carried on, as that is [illegible] business with which I am most acquainted? I [illegible] dependent upon my days' labor to support myself and small family. When I am well, I can do well where I am; but about every third year I am laid up with rheumatism for six or eight months. Would you advise me to change climate? I feel much better in warm weather. If you will advise me through your column of answers to correspondents, you will much oblige a reader and sufferer." The great likelihood is that you would have better health in almost any Southern State than where you are. Your best plan is to visit Florida, examine for yourself, get employment, and if it suits you, send for your family. It will be still better if you can get an engagement with a firm employing men in the South, so as to assure you employment at once, and possibly lessen the cost.

L. M. (we omit the name of the city) writes this most touching letter, which might move any father's heart to reform: "I am in trouble, and come to you for advice. My father is very intemperate, and night after night comes home intoxicated, and treats us all in the most disagreeable way. Only a very few weeks ago I had the dreadful sorrow of losing my dear mother, and she on her death-bed asked and begged him to break off his habit. He promised to do anything, and my mother died quietly; but only *one week* after she died he came home as bad as ever. What can I do? I would do anything on earth. Is there no medicine that could be given? He can be so kind when he tries, and it is a source of constant anxiety to me to see him in that condition. I feel that if a man has not the moral courage to desist, there is little hope; still there may be something. If you will give this your consideration, you would infinitely oblige me." Alas! there is nothing that can be done, but through the will of the inebriate himself. You can only use all proper means to influence his will, and seek patience from above.

Methodist (Bloomington, Ill.) says: "I have been a reader of the *Ledger* for a number of years; have never troubled you with a question. Will you please answer the following? Does the Greek Church of Russia practice baptism by immersion exclusively? Second, did the General Conference of the M. E. Church in the United States, about the year 1821, affirm that infants received regeneration by baptism, and was said doctrine changed about the year 1835? A Baptist minister affirmed the above statement to me a short time since. By answering the above questions you will confer a favor on one who has a poor opportunity of acquiring information." The Greek Church differs from the Roman Catholic, on baptism, chiefly in performing it by immersion or plunging the infant in the water. We have not heard of the alleged heresy of the M. E. Conference in 1821, and should be much surprised if it existed; but if it did, it is corrected now, and where is the use of raking up old sins? We have enough to get rid of in 1872, have we not?

M. N. (Indiana) says: "My case is this: I have been going to see a young lady for about four years. I love her as truly as man can love. We have been engaged for some time, and intended to be married this fall. I visited her a few weeks ago, and while there spoke to her guardian about it, she being an orphan. He said he thought us too young—she being nineteen, and I twenty-one; but since we have made up our minds that it shall be this fall, he will not object, as he does not believe in changing the time for a wedding, when once set. Miss —— would not do anything contrary to the wishes of her guardian, for he has been all to her a father could have been; he has supported her since her parents' death. We have agreed to ask your advice. I have read the *Ledger* for nine years." You had better not change the time.

Nicholas Nickleby inquires: "If a lady is engaged to a gentleman, would it be right for her to go with a party to a picnic, if the gentleman wishes her to remain, because business prevented him from accompanying her? An answer will be esteemed a favor." There are some things one has a right to do, which nevertheless it may be wise not to do, in consideration of the weakness of those with whom we have to do. He would be very weak who would make such a requirement, unless there was something special about the circumstances; but having done it, an engaged lady would probably on the whole do better by remaining at home than making a difference about it. We do not suggest, of course, that she will compensate herself for such deference afterward.

Antoinette (Reading, Mich.) writes: "I have been going with a young man for about two years, and I am deeply in love with him. We were engaged to be married, and had the day set; and three days before we were to be married, he came and told me that I could consider the engagement broken—that he could no longer love one who was false to him; and that was all he said about it. Do you think that I ought to go and tell him that I don't know what he means, or let it drop?" You ought certainly to demand an explanation. Probably some one has slandered you to your too credulous lover.

F. D. (Baltimore) says: "Will you be so kind as to answer me a question through your 'Notices to Correspondents?' Do the Irish people speak a distinct language or not?" The overwhelming majority of the Irish people speak English, quite as intelligibly as the English, and rather more fluently and correctly. A small portion speak the Irish tongue, which is as distinct as French or Spanish from other languages. This number is steadily decreasing.

C. and E. (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) write: "Will you please oblige two constant readers of the *Ledger* by answering through your columns the following question? In walking with a lady in the country in the evening, which is proper, to give her the right or left arm?" If you are on her right side, give her your left arm; if you are on her left side, give her your right arm. Any other arrangement would seem to be both difficult and awkward.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*